

ABSTRACT

A HISTORY OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
AMONGST THE COLOURED COMMUNITY
IN SOUTH AFRICA

1887-1997



by

UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

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Promoter: Douglas Lawrie

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

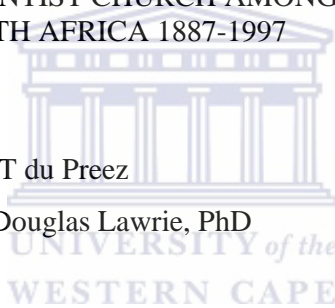
University of the Western Cape

Title: A HISTORY OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH AMONGST THE COLOURED COMMUNITY IN SOUTH AFRICA 1887-1997

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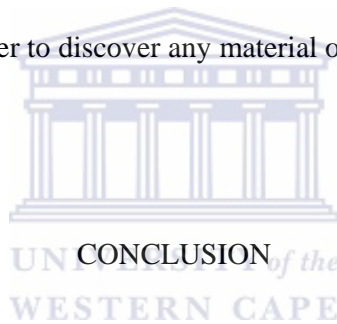
PROBLEM

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa was planted towards the end of the 19th century. Within less than forty years after its inception, a separate Coloured department developed. This was not to be the last organizational development impacting upon the Coloured community within the Church. The problem that this study will seek to address is: “What factors contributed to the different organizational phases that the predominantly ‘coloured’ section of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa underwent between 1887 and 1997?” It will examine particularly the role and impact of racism on the various organizational phases.

METHOD

The study was conducted primarily within the qualitative paradigm. This paradigm was selected as it allowed the researcher to analyse, interpret and understand events in history and the present in terms of the experience and definition of the world as experienced by others.

As a qualitative study, the research utilised the approach in which a literature study was conducted involving current literature and archival material on the subject. With regard to the archival material, extensive use was made of primary sources, specifically utilising the minutes of the different organizational structures. The researcher was able to source a large amount of material dating back to the turn of the 20th century. These materials were systematically scrutinised in order to discover any material of relevance to the topic being researched.



The study has demonstrated that racism has been an all-pervasive factor within South Africa since the time of the invasion of the country by European colonists. Commencing with the Dutch in 1652, the fabric of the social and political structure became inextricably linked to a hierarchy which placed the White Europeans in authority over the indigenous inhabitants of this country by virtue of being the conqueror backed by superior weapons of war and control of the economy and the means of production.

Legislation was enacted, firstly by the Dutch and subsequently by the British to protect the interests of the invaders and systematically disenfranchise the inhabitants of South Africa. The indigenous inhabitants of the country and their descendents were relegated to being 2nd and 3rd

class citizens of their country in order to feed the greed and expansionist agenda of the European invaders. This social structure impacted upon and influenced every aspect of South African existence.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church did not engage society on its view and position regarding human relations and racial discrimination. It uncritically merged its thinking and operations to reflect the majority view of the minority ruling class. This it did despite the biblical view of the Church on the nature and equality of man, its historical heritage and the counsel as given by Ellen White.

While some commentators have postulated that the Church was ahead of the government in applying *Apartheid*, it appears as though it would be more accurate to state the Church uncritically imbibed and adopted the policies of the government of the day. As has been seen, while the practice of segregation and separation became subsumed in the ideology of *Apartheid* as propagated by the post-1948 Nationalist government, the discrimination practiced by the Church found its roots in the social engineering initiated by Van Riebeeck and perpetuated by successive governors, prime ministers and other heads of state to varying degrees.

From the turn of the 20th century the Church pursued an agenda of separation culminating in formal organizational structures for the different racial groupings as instituted by the Dutch, British and subsequent South African governments.

Each phase of the organizational development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa, as applied to the Coloured community, can be seen to having been influenced by and

impacted upon by the Church's view and practice of separation based on colour. No evidence can be found in the documentation available that the creation of separate structures for different racial groups in South Africa was for any other reasons than racial separation.



UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

A HISTORY OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
AMONGST THE COLOURED COMMUNITY



A Dissertation
Presented in Fulfilment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Gerald T. du Preez
February 2010

The logo of the University of the Western Cape, featuring a classical building with six columns and a triangular pediment.

To the memory of my father

Ingram Frank du Preez

10 December 1921 – 30 May 1998

UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
APO	African People's Organization
AZAPO	Azanian People's Organisation
BPC	Black People's Convention
CC	Cape Conference
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CRC	Coloured Representative Council
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
DRCA	Dutch Reformed Church in Africa
DRMC	Dutch Reformed Mission Church
EXCOM	Executive Committee
GHC	Good Hope Conference
MDM	Mass Democratic Movement
NECC	National Education Crisis Committee
NF	National Forum
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
RCA	Reformed Church in Africa
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAD	South African Division
SAIRR	South African Institute of Race Relations
SAU	Southern Africa Union Conference (from December 1991)

SAUC	South African Union Conference (up till December 1991)
SDA	Seventh-Day Adventist
SU	Southern Union
TAD	Trans Africa Division
UDF	United Democratic Front
UN	United Nations
UNISA	University of South Africa
VOC	Vereenigde Oost-Indisch Compagnie (Dutch East India Company)



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church is a world-wide organization with a baptized membership of close to 16 million,¹ operating in 230² countries on every continent. With its origins in the United States of America in the mid 19th century, it found its way to South Africa by the 1870's with the first congregation of 26 members formed in 1887.

Today, the Church in South Africa³ consists of 106 000 members. It is a Church which is administered by a single organizational office located in Bloemfontein, called the Southern Africa Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. However, this was not always the case. In its history the Church in South Africa, on a national level, has moved from a unitary organizational unit, formed in 1902 as the South African Conference, to a fully segregated structure consisting, firstly, of a Group I and Group II under a South African Union Conference – Group I for Whites and Group II for all other races. This evolved at a later stage to the formation of the South African Union Conference – White, Coloured and Indian – and the Southern Union Mission Conference – Black. In 1991 the two latter Unions merged to form the Southern Africa Union Conference – reverting to a unified organizational entity.

¹ According to the church's official website, www.adventist.org [October, 2009], the total was 15 660 347 as at 31 Dec 2007. A distinction needs to be made between "adherents" and "members". "Members" refer to those who have received formal instruction from the Church in "baptismal classes" as adults (or children old enough to be instructed and to understand) and have been accepted into Church membership through immersion. "Adherents" would include those who have been baptised as well as those who have indicated an interest and accepted the teachings of the Church but have not been baptised as yet. Thus, throughout this paper, wherever reference is made to membership, it is referring to confessing, baptised, practicing members of the Church.

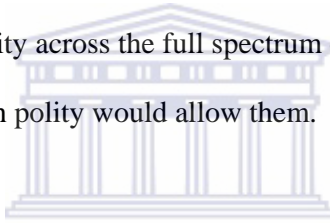
² Ibid.

³ Including Swaziland, Lesotho and Namibia.

Residing under the umbrella of the national structure has been ‘conferences,’ ‘fields’ and ‘missions.’⁴ These also have moved and are in the process of moving between segregated and non-segregated structures since the early part of the 20th century.

The Coloured Church

One sector of the SDA Church which has operated under the different and varied organizational structures is its Coloured membership. Its members, defined as Coloured by practice and, later, by law, were early-comers to the SDA Church in South Africa. They have contributed to the Church on all levels and held positions of leadership and responsibility across the full spectrum of activities engaged in by the Church – as far as Church polity would allow them.



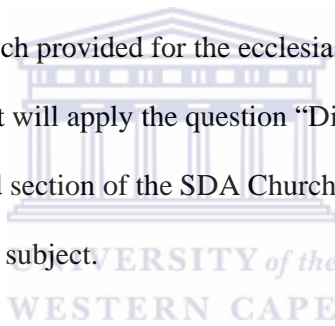
However, as in the socio-economic and political sphere, this community has occupied a unique position in the Seventh-day Adventist Church population in South Africa for many years. Not considered part of the minority White ruling class, or part of the Black majority held in subjection to White political and economic power, this group has wandered in the wilderness of group identity, subject to the decisions made for them by the rulers of the day. A facetious analogy that can be made is that, when likening the South African population to a piano, you have the white notes and the black notes – and the Coloured community are the cracks in between the two.

⁴ The different organizational components are outlined on page 104.

Organizational Development of the Coloured Church

This is a study of the history of the organizational development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church amongst that community in South Africa from 1887-1997. This study, done within the field of Church History, will pay specific attention to South African Church History in the late 19th and 20th century. It will be focusing on Seventh-day Adventist Church History, with specific emphasis on the organizational development amongst the Coloured population of the Seventh-day Church in the Cape area.⁵

It will examine the issues with regard to the four phases of development of the organizational structures which provided for the ecclesiastical and pastoral needs of the Coloured membership. It will apply the question “Did the organizational development of the Coloured section of the SDA Church in South Africa evolve as a response to racism?” to the subject.



On March 19, 2006, a combined, constituency meeting⁶ was held in Port Elizabeth. This meeting consisted of delegates from the Cape Conference⁷ of Seventh-day Adventists and delegates from the Southern Hope Conference⁸ of Seventh-day Adventists. The prime purpose of this meeting was to vote on the acceptance of a

⁵ Up to 1994 the area in the Cape had been called, firstly the Cape Colony and – since 1910 – the Cape Province. After 1994 it was split into three provinces: the Western, Eastern and Northern Cape. When the Cape area is referred to, it refers to the composite area covered by the three provinces.

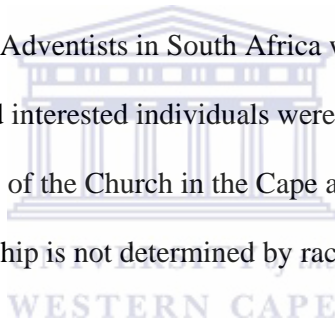
⁶ A constituency meeting is a general gathering of delegates of all the churches comprising a particular conference. The delegates are appointed as per the constitution, comprising administrators, employees and lay members. Regular meetings are held triennially to conduct business and choose officers. Special meetings are called as determined by the executive committee and/or the constituency.

⁷ The Cape Conference at that time was an organizational unit covering the Eastern, Western and Northern Cape Provinces. Its membership was, historically, largely White with its leadership structure almost exclusively White.

⁸ The Southern Hope Conference covered the same territory of the Cape Conference as explained in note 7. Its membership consisted primarily of Blacks, Coloureds, Indians and a few isolated Whites. Its leadership structure consisted of Blacks and Coloureds.

new, negotiated constitution which would lead to the formation of a new, non-racial conference. The joint meeting culminated in the formation of a merged conference consisting of White, Black and Coloured members.⁹ This meeting came twelve years after a similar proposal was considered and defeated.¹⁰ It came 15 years after the national structure of the Church disbanded its racially divided system and established a single national organization.¹¹

With the formation of the new Cape Conference, the organizational development of the Church with regard to the Coloured community came full circle. From 1887 when the first congregation was formed and 1889 when “the first formal organization of Seventh-day Adventists in South Africa was created”¹² at which time members, adherents and interested individuals were not separated by race, to 2006, the Coloured members of the Church in the Cape area were once again in an organization where membership is not determined by race.



This study uses as its terminal point 1997. It was in September of that year that the Good Hope Conference (Coloured) and the Southern Conference (Black) merged to form the Southern Hope Conference. With this development a separate organization for Coloured members ended. It was, however, not the end of separation within the SDA Church in South Africa.

⁹ The merged conferences adopted the name “Cape Conference”.

¹⁰ Separate sessions were held in December, 1994 in which the then Good Hope Conference and Southern Conference voted in favour of a merger and the Cape Conference voted against it.

¹¹ This took place in 1991 when the Southern African Union Conference (largely White) merged with the Southern Union Mission (largely Black).

¹² Swanepoel, *The Origin and Early History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa*, 17.

From 1997 to March 19, 2006, the Cape Conference continued to operate a parallel church organization in the Cape area. With the merger of the Cape Conference and the Southern Hope Conference on March 19, 2006, it ended the era of separation on racial grounds of the Church in the Cape area. However, on March 26, 2006, a combined constituency meeting held in the northern part of South Africa between the Transvaal Conference (historically predominantly White) and the Transvaal Orange Conference (historically predominantly Black) with the objective of completing the task of removing racially divided conferences failed. Before the delegates could be seated, the meeting was adjourned.¹³

“Racism” Defined

In applying the question “Did the organizational development of the Coloured section of the SDA Church in South Africa evolve as a response to racism?” the term “racism” needs to be defined.



The concepts of race, raciology, stereotyping, xenophobia, ethnocentrism, prejudice and racism have occupied the attention of anthropologists, sociologists, biologists and other scientists.¹⁴ Berkhofer makes the distinction between ethnocentric thinking and racism. He defines ethnocentrism as one individual judging the ideals and standards of others against his or her own. This, he states, has been present from ancient times. He views racism, on the other hand, as a recent social doctrine invented by Europeans during the period of modern expansion.¹⁵ This doctrine was used to justify and perpetuate the subjugation of

¹³ See Appendix IX for details of the Court Case launched to challenge the restructuring process.

¹⁴ See Groenewald, “Constructing Common Cause: A Brief History of ‘Race’” for a survey on such discussions.

¹⁵ R. F. Berkhofer, *The White Man’s Indian*, 55.

occupied countries on the assumption that European invaders were exercising their right to ownership based on their innate superiority which entitled them to annex, colonize or rape any territory in the quest for power through the acquisition of minerals, spices, lands and people.

Different views and divergent opinions exist with regard to race and racism. Some argue that racism is culturally based while others argue that it is based on skin pigmentation. These arguments thus place race either in an anthropological or sociological realm as opposed to a biological or physiological realm.

It could thus be argued that sociological racism would account for the Nazi purge of Jews during the World War II. Many of the Jews, in terms of colour, were no different from their persecutors – the difference was their religion and the sociological impact of that religion. However, Cox argues that the anti-Semitism as exhibited in Nazi Germany arises out of intolerance and not racism.¹⁶ Similarly, the genocide of Rwanda of the early 1990's involved persons of the same colour, but of different tribal groupings – the Hutu's and the Tutsi's. Again, skin pigmentation was not the determining factor.

In South Africa a classic example of prejudice, suspicion and, at times, hatred is the Anglo/*Afrikaner* divide. Exacerbated by the 1st and 2nd South African War, it is a rift which still plays itself out in the South African political and social scene. Again, this is not based on colour, but on language and culture.

¹⁶ Cox argues in *Cast, Class & Race*, 323, cited in Groenwald, 5, that the anti-Semitism as exhibited in Nazi Germany arises out of intolerance and not racism.

Biological racism, on the other hand, would account for a belief or expectation that an individual of particular skin pigmentation is inferior to an individual of a different pigmentation for no empirical reason other than the colour of the skin.

Bulmer and Solomos provide the following definition: racism is

an ideology of racial domination based on (i) beliefs that a designated racial group is either biologically or culturally inferior and (ii) the use of such beliefs to rationalize or prescribe the racial group's treatment in society, as well as to explain its social position and accomplishment.¹⁷

Bowser provides an additional component to racism by describing it as “a system of power . . . systematic, structural and pervasive.”¹⁸

Bulmer and Solomos combine the biological and sociological elements in suggesting that the domination (a superior/inferior relationship) in racism is based on inferiority derived from the skin pigmentation or the accompanying culture.

Landis posits that variations in skin colour do not result in any genetic differences and that it is only exposure to diverse opportunities that can account for any differentiation amongst the race groups.

He goes on to argue that the human race can justifiably be divided into racial groups: White, Negroid and other – this would be Indians, Chinese, Asians and any other whose skin colour would be different from the distinctly White or Negroid.

He states further that the diverse skin pigmentation groupings presuppose dissimilar

¹⁷ Bulmer and Solomos, 4. Cited in Groenewald, 17.

¹⁸ Bowser, 128. Cited in Groenewald, 17.

cultures. These cultures, he postulates, can be learnt by individuals from the various racial groups.¹⁹ Using Landis' argument, biological or physiological dissimilarity cannot, therefore, be used as the basis for discrimination as, genetically, no difference exists. Where there are cultural differentiations, according to Landis, these are present only because of exposure to diverse circumstances and opportunities.

Thus, as with biological or physiological difference, cultural differences do not provide a basis for assuming and propagating a hierarchy of superiority of one group over another as is done through the doctrine of racism referred to by Berkhofer. He states that raciology – “the supposedly scientific study of racial differences” – operated on a non-scientific basis. What it sought to do was discover “data to confirm the inferences based upon prejudice and casual observation.”²⁰

Berkhofer, in contrast to Bulmer and Solomos, does not include culture in his definition of racism. He states:

[R]acism rests on two assumptions: (1) the moral qualities of a human group are positively correlated with their physical characteristics, and (2) all humankind is divisible into superior and inferior stocks upon the basis of the first assumption.²¹

Bulmer and Solomos refer to biological and cultural superiority/inferiority being delineated according to colour. As questionable as that ideology is, Berkhofer introduces a concept that is even more damning with respect to this dogma – that with regard to the moral qualities of a human group. Pursuing this line of thinking

¹⁹ Landis, P.H. *Introductory Sociology*. Cited in Groenewald, 5.

²⁰ Berkhofer, 57.

²¹ Berkhofer, 55.

to its logical conclusions helps to explain how a White group with “superior” moral qualities could deliberately and proactively plan to decimate a Non-White population – after all, “they” were morally inferior – under the guise of a Christian government or even a Christian Church. It explains how a five-year old child, brought up within an environment that propagated this dogma, could state to two Non-White ministers: “Julle is nie mense nie; julle is diere.”²²

Rhoda Kadali, a human rights activist, describes racism simply as “a system that privileges people on the basis of race.”²³ Dr Wilmot James, former director of the Human Sciences Research Council, describes racism as “a presumption of inferiority or superiority or consequential difference based merely on appearance, principally skin colour.”²⁴



For the purpose of this study racism is defined as:

The belief by those who consider themselves to be White and who, by virtue of their ‘Whiteness,’ are intrinsically superior to those they consider to be Non-White. This belief is predicated on the assumption that all those not considered to be White are inherently inferior. The acceptance of this belief leads to the assumption and usurpation of power by those who consider themselves White over those not considered by them to be White.

The hypothesis that will be tested is that the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa embarked on a protracted practice resulting in the continued subjugation of the Coloured membership in organizational structures which

²² “You are not people; you are animals.” See Appendix VI, A.

²³ Fisher, 92.

²⁴ Ibid., 94.

separated them from and placed them in a position of inferiority to the White membership of the Church for no other reason than their colour.²⁵

“Coloured” Defined

Within South Africa, racism, as the acceptance of the inferiority of an individual based on ethnicity, becomes complicated by the sub-division of those persons placed in the subservient categories. The Population Registration Act of 1950 (Act 30 of 1950) laid out guidelines for “the determination of person’s race according to the colour of their skin.”²⁶ The Act determined that a White person was a person who “in appearance obviously is, or who is generally accepted as a white person, but does not include a person who, although in appearance obviously a white person, is generally accepted as a coloured person”²⁷ According to the Act, a “native” or Black person was someone who was generally accepted as “a member of any aboriginal race or tribe of Africa.”²⁸ It is interesting to note that, when it came to the “Coloured”, the classification was based, not on what or who they were, but who they were *not* – “a coloured person’ means a person who is not a white person or a native.”²⁹

Ryan Fisher argues against the terminology used above. He refers to Steve Biko who promoted the concept of “Black” being the point of reference as opposed to

²⁵ See Appendix VI for incidences which illustrate “petty” racism.

²⁶ Ibid., 68

²⁷ Act No 30 of 1950, (xv), 277. This law remained on the statute books until 1991 when it was repealed through the Population Registration Act Repeal Act No 114 of 1991. Any person born since then did not have to be classified at birth or subsequently as was the case since 1950. However, the race classification terms are still used for statistical purposes, primarily in attempting to redress the inequalities of the past. See, for example, the 1998 South Africa Demographic and Health Survey done on behalf of the Department of Health as part of the National Health Information System of South Africa.

²⁸ Ibid., (x), 277

²⁹ Ibid., (iii), 277

“White.” Thus all Africans, Coloureds and Indians would be called “Black” and Whites would be called “Non-Black.”³⁰ Reflecting on the current discussion with regard to race in South Africa, he says, “I still believe that the only definition of ‘coloureds’ is people who could not be fitted into any of the other apartheid-era definitions.”³¹

The definitions given in Act 30 of 1950 would have been amusing if they had not formed part of the cornerstone that systematically stigmatized sections of the population as being inferior based on a nebulous, subjective classification bereft of all logic. Without any formal classification having taken place prior to the Act, how was the government to determine who “in appearance obviously . . . [was], or who . . . [was] generally accepted as a white person”? On the other hand, how would they be able to determine who those individuals were who “although in appearance obviously . . . [were] white person[s], [but were] . . . generally accepted as . . . coloured person[s]”? If superiority resided in an intrinsic, genetic ingredient within the DNA of a White person, it should have been possible to empirically determine and delineate the members of the different groups. This is supported by West and Boonzaaier who state that the 1950 “classification is not based on ‘race’ in any scientific sense, and is inherently imprecise.”³² The lawyer Arthur Suzman describes it as attempting to “define the undefinable”.³³

³⁰ Ryland Fisher, *Race*, 2007, 4.

³¹ Fisher, *Is There a Coloured Identity?* Thought Leader/Mail & Guardian Online <http://www.thoughtleader.co.za/rylandfisher/2008/02/27/is-there-a-coloured-identity/>. [September, 2009].

³² West, M. E. and E. A. Boonzaaier. Population Groups, Politics and Medical Science. *South African Medical Journal*, vol. 76, 2 September, 1989.

³³ Suzman, A. Race Classification and Definition in the Legislature of the Union of South Africa, *Acta Juridica*, 1960, 367. Cited in West and Boonzaaier.

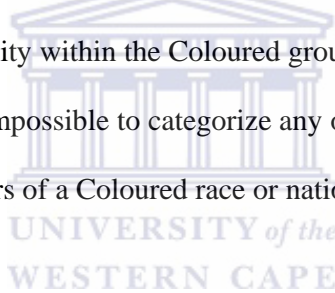
How, then, would a Coloured person be identified? As Non-Black; as Non-White?

Other than as to what they were *not*, what *were* they? Fisher comments:

I have never been able to relate to being a coloured. Is it because of skin colour? It cannot be, because some coloureds are whiter than most whites, while other coloureds are blacker than most Africans.

Is it because of hair texture? I don't think so, because some coloureds have the straightest and shiniest hair, while others have hair that is so curly that they would never have passed the old apartheid-era pencil test, where government officials would stick a pencil into a person's hair to determine his or her race.³⁴

Fisher goes on to cite culture, religion and language as additional non-identifiers of "colouredness," as the diversity within the Coloured group and the commonality with other groups makes it impossible to categorize any of the five characteristics cited as identification markers of a Coloured race or nation.



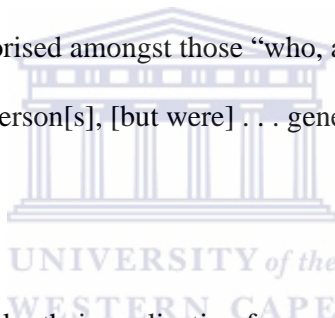
In 1939 J. S. Marais stated that

the coloured do not appear to differ from us [whites] today in anything except their poverty, and that they share with our large army of poor whites. As far as "civilized standards" are concerned, all that needs be said is that many of the Coloured people live in a more "civilized" way than many Europeans in South Africa. The prejudice against them is therefore not based on their poverty The unfortunate truth is that the South Africans' colour prejudice is, indeed, based on colour, or to speak more accurately, is derived from an unshakeable belief in the essential inferiority of the Coloured man's blood. This philosophy of blood and race is held by most Afrikaners with a Nazi-like fervour.³⁵

³⁴ Fisher, 45 – 46.

³⁵ Du Pré, *Separate but Unequal*, 22-23.

The illogicality of the system of separation supposedly based on colour is demonstrated by the process that took place after the passing of the 1950 Population Registration Act. An example of this is that within one family, without any “apparent” differences, some members of the family were classified White while others were classified Coloured.³⁶ In another instance, as noted in the minutes of the Cape Conference executive committee, the school authorities were instructed not to act on a family whose children were attending the (White) Hillcrest Primary School until the determinations of the Population Registration Act had been completed. For this family their continued acceptance in a school where their children were already attending would be determined by a subjective decision as to whether they could be categorised amongst those “who, although in appearance [were] obviously . . . white person[s], [but were] . . . generally accepted as . . . coloured person[s].”³⁷



With regard to the same family, their application for membership in the Mowbray Church – a White church – was held in abeyance pending a ruling by the state as to which side of the colour line they fell. The Cape Conference action reads:

VOTED to pass on to the South African Union Conference the request of Brother J. P. Brophy to join the Mowbray Church from one of the Cape Field churches, and to recommend to the Union Conference that no decision

³⁶ Interview with Mary* whose parents and siblings were all classified White. They had moved – temporarily – into what could be considered a White area during the period of classification and were thus classified White. She was working for what was considered a Coloured organization and was living on the premises of the organization when the classification was done. She was classified Coloured. The irony was that her father worked for the same organization. If they had been placed together in a police identity parade no difference in appearance would have been detected between her and her siblings. She has spent the rest of her life suffering the indignities associated with having the “misfortune” of being a classified as a Coloured person in South Africa.

*Her name has been changed to protect her identity. She is still alive [September 25, 2009].

³⁷ CC294 & 295/107/57.

be taken on this or any similar request until the population registration in respect of these persons is complete.³⁸

The import of racial classification had practical implications that impacted upon the day to day lives of those living in a segregated South Africa based on colour – albeit arbitrarily determined. During the same year of the Brophy incident, the Cape Conference employed two teachers to teach at Hillcrest Primary School – a White school. Around the same time two teachers were employed to teach at Good Hope Training School, owned and operated by the Southern African Union Conference and operating within the Cape Field to serve the Coloured constituency. Their respective salaries were set as follows:

	Hillcrest Primary	Good Hope Training School	
Ms Linton	£35.15s.0p	£15.0s.0p	Ms Grewe
Ms Raitt (1 st yr of teaching)	£30.05s.0p	£7.0s.0p	Ms Phillips (1 st yr of teaching) ³⁹

All four teachers were qualified. All four were employed by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Two were White. Two were Coloured. The starting salary for the White teacher was almost 5 times that of the Coloured teacher. On what basis? Based on an arbitrary decision by the government to classify one White and the other Coloured – and the Church’s apparent acceptance of the superiority of one individual over the other based on colour.

³⁸ CC243/91/56

³⁹ GHTS34/6/57; CC288a/104a/57 & 288/b/104/57

In attempting to determine a basis for racial classification a school of thought in Sweden and America came up with the cephalix index.⁴⁰ This branch of “science” sought to find a correlation between the size of the brain, shape of skull, and its related physiology and the basis of social progress.⁴¹ The leader of the American School of Craniology, Samuel George Morton, reached a conclusion that modern Caucasian Americans had a skull measuring 79 cubic inches and that of the Hottentots and Australian Bushmen, 75 cubic inches.⁴² The conclusion reached was that the larger the skull, the greater the development of the brain and the more advanced on the level of intelligence and social progress.

The findings of this School were summarized by Nott and Gliddon:

Intelligence, activity, ambition, progression, high anatomical development, characterize some races; stupidity, indolence, immobility, savagism, low anatomical development characterize others. Lofty civilization, in all cases, has been achieved solely by the “Caucasian” group. Mongolian races, save in the Chinese family, in no instance have reached beyond the degree of semi-civilization; while the Black races of Africa and Oceanica no less than the *Barbarous* tribes of America have remained in utter darkness for thousands of years⁴³

Whether it be by measuring the skull or determining whether a person “in appearance obviously is, or who is generally accepted as a white person . . . [or] a person . . . is not a white person or a native,”⁴⁴ or whether it be by the ubiquitous

⁴⁰ Berkhof, 58.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Josiah Nott and George R. Gliddon, *Types of Mankind; Or, Ethnological Researches Based Upon the Ancient Monuments, Paintings, Sculptures and Crania of Races*, 461. Cited in Berkhof, 58.

⁴⁴ Act No 30 of 1950, (iii, xv), 277.

“pencil test” employed by the Nationalist government post 1948,⁴⁵ all attempts to determine the value of a human being on biological and physiological criteria flies in the face of logic and is reduced, as Berkhofer asserts, to shoring up racism by seeking to acquire “data to confirm the inferences based upon prejudice and casual observation.”⁴⁶

As with other authors⁴⁷, the researcher struggles with the use of different racial classifications, owing to the pejorative connotation that was applied to them and that still lingers today.⁴⁸ Bourne notes that “it is impossible to describe daily reality for millions of South Africans in any other way and such terms as “racial stratification”, “racial differences”, “black”, “white” and “coloured” cannot be avoided”⁴⁹ He concludes by stating: “Their use, however, does not imply legitimacy of racist terminology.”⁵⁰ For the purpose of this study the terms European (or White), Black (or Native), Coloured and Indian (or Asian) are used to distinguish between the different racial groups as was delineated by colonists of the early years covered by this study and, later, entrenched in legislation.

While it was Act 30 of 1950 that brought in race classification, other acts had been successively promulgated in Dutch- and British-controlled Africa. This was perpetuated after the formation of the Union of South Africa. Acts such as the Land Act of 1913 and 1916 parcelled up South Africa, with land being restricted for the

⁴⁵ This was a test in which a pencil was put through the hair of an individual whose race was in question. If the pencil stayed in the hair, the person was non-white. If it fell out easily, the person was deemed to be white. See Du Pré, *Separate but Unequal*, 69-70.

⁴⁶ Berkhofer, 57.

⁴⁷ Du Pré, *Separate but Unequal*, 4

⁴⁸ Bourne D. E. Nomenclature in a Pigmentocracy – A Scientist’s Dilemma, *South African Medical Journal*, vol. 76, 2 September, 1989.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

native population to 7% and 13% respectively. The impact of these and other acts, as seen by Sol Plaatje, was to relegate the South African Black to “a pariah in the land of his birth.”⁵¹

The SDA Church in South Africa developed within this milieu. The structure the Church progressively adopted reflected the segregated society that became South Africa as the ideology of separateness fuelled by racism gave birth to the dogma of *Apartheid*.

Hence the question – Did the organizational development of the Coloured section of the SDA Church in South Africa evolve as a response to racism?

The Four Phases



The work amongst the Coloured community can be divided into four phases:

- (1) the Church in its infancy in South Africa as a unitary body encompassing all races, 1887-1933;
- (2) the separation of the Coloureds from the Whites into a separate, subordinate, dependent body called the Cape Field under the direct governance of the national body, 1933-1959. The Cape Field supervised the work amongst the Coloured community throughout South Africa with Whites occupying leadership positions;
- (3) the formation of the Cape Field into the Good Hope Conference, a self-governing unit within the national body, 1960-1997. In 1978 the Coloured churches and institutions in the Transvaal and Oranje-Natal were absorbed

⁵¹ Sol Plaatje, *Native Life in South Africa*, 7.

into those Conferences. The Good Hope Conference was left to care for the work amongst the Coloured community in the Cape area only under Coloured leadership;

(4) the formation of a new organizational unit brought about by the merger of the Good Hope Conference and the Southern Conference.⁵² The name chosen for this new structure was “The Southern Hope Conference” (1997—2006).

The Link Between the Researcher and the Topic

The first president⁵³ to take up office in the Southern Hope Conference was the researcher.



The historical connection between the researcher and the SDA Church goes back to virtually the emergence of the Church in South Africa. Listed amongst its early converts are Serene Ingram Andrew Sutherland and Maryanne Edith Sutherland, who married in 1880.⁵⁴ The Sutherlands had three daughters, viz., Kirsten, Victoria and Helen. Helen married Frank du Preez, whose eldest son, Ingram Frank du Preez, is the father of the researcher. Danie Theunissen, also one of the early Coloured converts, married Helen’s sister, Kirsten. He went on to become the first Coloured minister in the SDA Church in South Africa. Danie is thus the grand uncle of the researcher.

⁵² This Conference was a primarily Black Conference with Black leadership covering the same geographical territory as the Cape Conference.

⁵³ The chief executive and administrative officer of a Conference is called a “President.”

⁵⁴ Du Preez and Du Pré, *A Century of Good Hope*, vol. II, 3, 7.

Ingram du Preez (1921 – 1998) entered the employ of the Church in 1939 and continued working for the organization until his retirement in 1981.⁵⁵ After retirement he remained active through lay-involvement in the activities of the Church along with his other interests and hobbies. Having died in 1998, his life thus encompasses all four phases described above. The researcher (born 1953) attended SDA institutions for all of his primary and high-schooling as well as tertiary education up to the Master's level. He has spent more than 30 years of his working life employed by the Church in various capacities. His life spans three of the phases cited in this study.

Having grown up in a church-employee home and having been employed by the Church for a significant period of time, the researcher has been exposed to a fair amount of oral, written and living history. The researcher is also well acquainted with the administrative processes of the Church, having served on all the administrative levels within the Church in South Africa.⁵⁶

Objective of the Study

It is hoped that the study will accomplish the following: (i) the documenting of a particular phase of history for posterity; (ii) contextualizing the period of history within the socio-economic and political milieu. Emphasis will be placed on this aspect. An argument will be made for the importance of writing South African SDA Church history within context; (iii) providing insights as to the factors which

⁵⁵ He completed 40 years of service at the end of February 1981, having worked for the organization as a teacher, lecturer, registrar, academic dean, principal, rector and national director for Stewardship and Education for the Southern Union.

⁵⁶ The researcher has served in the following capacities: pastor/evangelist; church school teacher and lecturer at primary, secondary and tertiary level; departmental director on Conference level; Dean of Men at a boarding school; Conference President; as Academic Dean and, currently; President of the senior college operated by the Church in South Africa.

impacted the development of the different organizational phases; and, if any mistakes have been made in the past, (iv) to assist present and future generations in not perpetrating the errors of our predecessors.

The Emergence of the SDA Church

While the Seventh-day Adventist Church believe that their roots go back as far as Christ and the disciples themselves⁵⁷, modern Adventism can be traced back to “The Great Awakening”⁵⁸ that swept across first swept Europe and America in the early to middle part of the eighteenth century. “The Second Great Awakening” – a continuation of the Great Awakening that spread to states such as Tennessee and Kentucky during the early part of the 19th century⁵⁹ – with its call to reformation and revival sounding from the pulpits of many Protestant churches, focused a great deal of discussion on the return of Christ.⁶⁰ One of the leading exponents of the imminent *Parousia* was William Miller.⁶¹

A farmer-turned-preacher, William Miller (1782-1849) of Low Hampton, New York, had converted from deism to Christianity in 1816 and became a Baptist. He was an avid reader, dedicated to God's word, and sought to reconcile apparent biblical difficulties raised by deists. Relying largely on the Cruden's Concordance in his studies, he developed a focus on the imminent, literal, physical return of

⁵⁷ Schwarz and Greenleaf, *Light Bearers: A History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church*, 13

⁵⁸ Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission*. 3.

⁵⁹ Tucker and McAllister, *Journey in Faith: A History of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*, 41.

⁶⁰ Damsteegt, 13.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

Jesus to this earth. This message, called the Advent Message, he began preaching in 1831.⁶²

As a result, many thousands (called Millerites) accepted Miller's idea that Jesus would return sometime in the year covering 21 March, 1843 to 21 March, 1844.⁶³ He had arrived at this date based upon a study of Daniel 8:14⁶⁴ which says, *"And he said to me, "For 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored."* Through painstaking, systematic Bible study, he interpreted the 2300 evenings and mornings to be years and counted forward from 457 BC when the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem was given (Dan. 9:24-25).⁶⁵ When his initial predictions for the Second Advent to take place "about 1843"⁶⁶ failed, one of Miller's followers, Samuel Snow, adjusted his findings to conclude that Jesus would return on October 22, 1844⁶⁷ under what was called "the Seventh-month Movement".⁶⁸ After this too failed, many Millerites renounced their belief in the imminent return of Christ and returned to their former churches.⁶⁹

On the morning following the "Great Disappointment" of October 22, 1844, Hiram Edson claimed to have seen a vision. Walking through a wheat field, he said that he saw that Christ as our High Priest had not left the heavenly sanctuary to return to this earth on October 22, 1844, but had entered into the second part of the sanctuary. He concluded that the Millerites had been right about the revised time of

⁶² Ibid., 14.

⁶³ Ibid., 37.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 31.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 19.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 40.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 91.

⁶⁸ Schwarz and Greenleaf, 48.

⁶⁹ Damsteegt, 100.

October 22, 1844, but wrong about the event.⁷⁰ In other words, Jesus' return was not to earth, but a move into the second compartment of the heavenly sanctuary.⁷¹

Joseph Bates (1792-1872), a retired sea captain and a convert to "Millerism"⁷² was an early leader in the Sabbatarian Adventist movement. He gave strong support to the studies of O. R. L. Crosier who, through a thorough study of Scripture, began to promote the idea of Jesus moving into the second compartment of the heavenly sanctuary. As early as May 1846 he recommended that Crosier's treatment of the sanctuary was "superior to any thing of this kind. . . ."⁷³ Bates greatly influenced James (1821-1881) and Ellen White (1827-1915). It is these two, with Bates, who were to become the driving force behind the establishing of the SDA Church.⁷⁴

Numerous reports state that Ellen G. White nee Harmon (1827-1915) saw visions from an early age. Such was the case shortly after the Great Disappointment of 1844. In December of that year, 17 year-old Ellen Harmon claimed to see in a vision of a narrow path where a light was shining to guide the Advent people.⁷⁵ This she interpreted to be a vindication of the position taken by the movement and an encouragement to pursue the direction being taken with the assurance of Divine Guidance.⁷⁶

Subsequent visions confirmed and corroborated biblical truths as it was developed by the early Adventist pioneers after much prayer and the study of the Bible.

⁷⁰ Knight, *A Search for Identity*, 62, 63.

⁷¹ See Exodus 25, Leviticus 16, Daniel 8:14, Hebrews 8 & 9 and Revelation 11:19.

⁷² Knight, *Joseph Bates: The Real Founder of Adventism*, 59.

⁷³ Knight, *Lest We Forget*, 56

⁷⁴ R.E. Graham, *Ellen G. White: Co-Founder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church*, 32.

⁷⁵ White, *Early Writings*, 14-16.

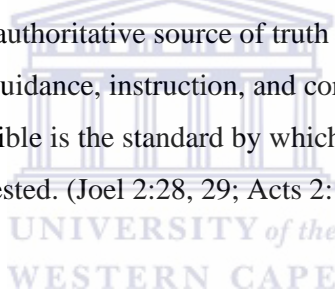
⁷⁶ Schwarz and Greenleaf, 62.

The Role and Place of Ellen G White in the Seventh-day Adventist Church

Much material is available to the reader to determine the role and place of Ellen White within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Graham, Knight, Jemison, Douglas and others have dealt with the matter in depth and detail.

In the official publication *Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . .* the Church sets out its understanding of “The Gift of Prophecy” as follows:

One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord’s messenger, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. (Joel 2:28, 29; Acts 2:14-21; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 12:17; 19:10.)



For the purpose of this study it is important to note that, while the Seventh-day Adventist Church accepts the reformist principle of *sola scriptura*, the Church believes that “the messages given . . . through Ellen White are divinely inspired.”⁷⁷ She is generally accepted by the Church as “God’s messenger.”⁷⁸

This inspiration does not, however, place her writings on the same level as Scripture. She herself refers to her writings as the “lesser light” intended by God to lead individuals to the “greater light” – God’s word in Scripture.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ T. H. Jemison, *A Prophet Among You*, 432.

⁷⁸ H. E. Douglas, *Messenger of the Lord: The Prophetic Ministry of Ellen G. White*, xvii.

⁷⁹ White, *Review and Herald*, January 20, 1903.

According to Graham, White holds a “normative place in official Adventist thought.”⁸⁰ Thus when a particular issue is being raised, discussed or analysed, it is important to the Adventist community to know what Ellen White has to say – especially where no direct instruction comes from Scripture.

On the issue of racism this has proven to be the case. Her writings have been used for and against separation based on race. Thus this study will refer to her views as contained in her writings to gain an understanding of Adventist thought and practice on the matter within the context of this study.

Landmarks in the History of the SDA Church

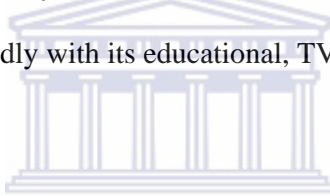
Some significant dates in the historical development of the Church are:

- **1849** - First paper, the *Present Truth*, was printed in Middletown, Conn.
- **1850** - First issue of the *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, printed in Paris, Maine.
- **1860** - Name of Seventh-day Adventist adopted by the Church.
- **1863** - First General Conference and formation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church on May 21, 1863.
- **1871** - First college opened which became Andrews University.
- **1874** - J. N. Andrews sent to Switzerland as a missionary.
- **1885** - Missionary work begun in Australia.
- **1887** - Missionary work begun in South Africa
- **1893** - Union College, Claremont, established.
- **1915** - Ellen G. White dies on July 16, at St. Helena, CA.

⁸⁰ Graham, 40.

- **1941** - Opening of Theological Seminary at Takoma Park, Washington, D.C.
- **1942** - Voice of Prophecy radio show begins broadcasting in USA, coast to coast.
- **1950** - Faith for Today TV show begins.
- **1955** - SDA Church membership hits 1 million.
- **1986** - SDA Church membership hits 5 million.
- **2003** – SDA Church membership hits 12 894 005 (October)

Today, the SDA Church is very evangelical with mission efforts worldwide, numerous publications, and many educational facilities. It has over 16 million members and is growing rapidly with its educational, TV, Radio, and publication based outreaches.⁸¹



The History of the Work amongst the Coloured Community in South Africa

Amongst the farm workers employed by Wessels was a young Coloured man named Daniel Christian Theunissen (1873-1956).⁸² While no evidence is found to suggest that he immediately accepted the new teaching of his employer, it is reasonable to assume that he came into contact with the teachings of the Church around 1885 when Wessels first began to observe the Sabbath. Thus the work and influence of the SDA's amongst the Coloured community in South Africa can be traced back to the very commencement of the establishment of the SDA Church in South Africa.

⁸¹ For comprehensive histories on the SDA Church, especially its early years and its development in America, see Knight, Land, Schwarz, Froom, etc.

⁸² Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. II, 1.

However, it is tragic that the documented histories of the SDA Church in this country pay scant attention to the development of the work amongst the Coloured community. The same can be said for the work amongst the Blacks.⁸³ The main texts on SDA history in South Africa, *The Origin and Early History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa. 1886-1920*, an unpublished MA thesis by L. Francois Swanepoel (UNISA 1972) and *A History of the Growth and Development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Southern Africa, 1920—1960*, an unpublished DPhil dissertation by Ronald C.L. Thompson (Rhodes University 1977) are quite comprehensive when it comes to the development of the work amongst the Whites in South Africa. However, the work amongst the Non-Whites is handled as though it is merely a footnote in history.

In Swanepoel's work, the main discussion of the development of the work amongst the Coloured people occupies pp 126-127. Further incidental references are made in his thesis. Contrast this with pages 130-133 being devoted to a discussion of a certain Professor Elfers and his activities during 1909. It is amazing that when a "[h]istory of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa" is being written, the work of an individual can occupy more space than the work amongst a sizeable portion of the Church. The argument could be put forward that insufficient information was available. This paper seeks to rectify that postulation.

Similarly, R. C. L. Thompson, in giving a background to the history of the White Training School, Helderberg College⁸⁴, covers the material fairly comprehensively

⁸³ M. I. Buwa, *The Seventh-day Adventist Work in East Griqualand: A Brief Overview of Cancel Mission – Founding, Growth, and Potential: 1952-1983*, v.

⁸⁴ Established in Somerset West in 1928, the College admitted its first regular student of colour in 1974.

in pages 134-143. However, when a discussion of the establishment of the Coloured Training School, Good Hope Training School is pursued, pages 143-145 suffice. Both institutions were established around the same time.⁸⁵

P. J. van Eck, in his M.Ed. thesis, *Sewende-dag-Aventistiese Opvoeding: Historiese-Prinsipieel* (unpublished, UNISA 1948), shows a similar bias towards the White work. Once more the two premier institutions serving the different population groups are used to illustrate the point.

Two paragraphs are devoted to Good Hope Training School on page 46, while thirty eight pages on Helderberg College (46-83). When giving the motivation for Helderberg being the logical successor to Union College⁸⁶ and Spion Kop⁸⁷ and the emphasis and scope devoted to it, he states:

Aangesien die volledige toepassing van die Adventistiese opvoedkundige beginsels in Suid-Afrika sig openbaar te Helderberg-Kollege gaan ons meer in die besonder op die geskiedenis en huidige stand van die inrigting in. Hier ook vind die grootste mate van

⁸⁵ Helderberg College in 1928 and Good Hope Training School in 1929. This is how R. C. L. Thompson proceeds to discuss the further development of the two institutions: “The capital outlay at Helderberg College resulted in a building spree on the campus during the twenties unequalled by any previous period. As a final act in an era of expansion of training institutions, Helderberg College took its place among the institutions as the greatest accomplishment of this era.” 159. “The Great Depression also retarded progress and development among the Coloured members. Good Hope Training School established on the eve of the depression, did not receive much attention until 1934 when the first permanent building, a house for the Principal, was erected. The first three class-rooms in a solid brick building were built three years later.” 167.

⁸⁶ Established 1893 in Claremont with 65 students. Swanepoel, 168, 172.

⁸⁷ When Union College closed in 1918, it relocated to Spion Kop, “a farm some twenty miles from Ladysmith, Natal.” This farm was the site of where the Battle of Spion Kop was fought between the British and the Transvaal Boers on 24 January, 1900. Swanepoel, 178, 179. See also C.F.J. Muller, *Vyfhonderd Jaar: Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedenis*. Afrikaans historical accounts of South Africa, such as Muller, use the spelling *Spioenkop*, while English anthologies use either the Afrikaans *Spioenkop* or the anglicised *Spion Kop* (See E.A. Walker, *A History of South Africa*, Reader’ Digest, *Illustrated History of South Africa*. Official SDA documents use the anglicised form. See SAUC EXCOM minutes 4 August 1929.)

aanpassing van die spesifieke Adventistiese beginsels aan
landsomstandighede plaas.⁸⁸

Thus in one fell swoop the educational work amongst the Coloureds and the Blacks in South Africa, who, initially had been students at the multi-racial Union College⁸⁹ are relegated to institutions which, by implication, did not “conform to the specific Adventist principles” (own translation). This is remarkable, considering that, in 1936, Van Eck was a staff member at one of those institutions declared, by inference, not conforming to Seventh-day Adventist principles. He served as a teacher at Good Hope Training School, under the principalship of P.H. Mantall.⁹⁰

The first Coloured school was established in 1916 in Parow but closed after a short time.⁹¹ From 1929, the educational work amongst the Coloured community was revived and continues up to today. When Van Eck makes his comment, justifying the focus on the White institution, four church schools were being operated for the Coloured community, in addition to Good Hope Training School which, between 1941 and 1948 (the time during which Van Eck completed his thesis), had twenty-one graduates. From 1941-1943, W. H. Hayter had been principal. He was succeeded by G. S. Glass (1944-1947) and O.B. Hanson (1948-1952).

These institutions, set up by the local churches and Conference, are judged by Van Eck as not “conform[ing] to . . . Adventist principles.” Was there a failure in the establishment and operation of the institutions, or did they have the “misfortune” of

⁸⁸ P. J. van Eck, “*Sewndedag-Adventistiese Opvoeding: Historiese-Prinsipeel.*” M.Ed. thesis, unpublished, UNISA, 1948.

⁸⁹ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. I, 63.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 79.

⁹¹ Ibid., 64. The Black Training School, Bethel College, traces its origins to the same time. See Swanepoel, 182-183.

being Coloured institutions? The apparent dismissive handling of the history of the Coloured and Black work as cited with reference to Swanepoel and Thompson, seems to reflect the approach taken by Van Eck.

The initial work amongst the Coloured community (1887—1892) is not documented as a separate line of development within the Church in South Africa, as membership was not racially determined. However, by 1916 Cape Conference Secretary's Record lists three churches having almost exclusively Coloured members: Salt River, Parow and Uitenhage. The latter congregation is listed as a "Coloured" Church. In March 1922, the Record reflects there being 17 churches, with two churches in Uitenhage, one White and one Coloured. Salt River and Parow, most of whose members were Coloured, are not shown as separate churches. A year later, Port Elizabeth also shows two churches – White and Coloured. It is only in June 1923, that the Secretary's Record for the Cape Conference adds, after listing the total membership as carried forward from the previous quarter and adjusted by additions and losses, the words, "Less Coloured Membership." Subsequent reports list Coloured churches and membership separately. At this time (1923), there were four Coloured churches with a membership of 86. The White Church had 484 members. In September 1925, the Record further divides the church membership into three categories for the first time: European 511, Coloured 127 and Native 291.

The work amongst the Coloured and Black are subsequently referred to as "Coloured Department" and "Native Department." The Native Department

disappears from the Cape Conference record in 1926.⁹² By December 1932, the European Department shows 964 members and the Coloured Department, 395.⁹³

The agitation to separate the churches where Whites and Non-Whites worshipped together seems to have taken place around the middle of 1925. The response of the congregation where this was mooted is worth noting in full as reflected in the Minutes of the Cape Conference Executive Committee of June 28, 1925:

WHEREAS, at a meeting of the officers and leading European members of the Wynberg Church held on the afternoon of the 27th inst., every member of the church present expressed the earnest wish and desire for the Wynberg Church to continue as one united church, instead of being separated into European and Coloured churches, and that one church building be built instead of two and that the church building be built at the top of Church Street, therefore,

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with the expressed wishes of the Wynberg Church, the Conference approve of that church continuing as a united church as at present, and that the church building be built on the plot of ground at the top of Church Street, which has been purchased for that purpose.⁹⁴

This was not the end of the matter. In a far-reaching action taken by the Cape Conference Executive Committee held September 8 and 9, 1930, a vote was passed:

⁹² The following action was taken by the Cape Conference Executive Committee in 1926: "VOTED that we express our favourable attitude towards the disconnection of the Native work from our Conference and its administration by the Union Conference from January 1927." 202/55/26.

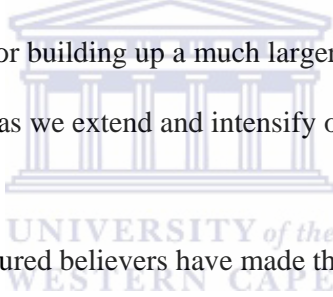
⁹³ The Native Department disappears from the Cape Conference records at the end of 1926.

⁹⁴ CC27/10/25

That in harmony with the action of September 7, 1930, of the South African Union Committee, we approve the principle of separate Churches for our Coloured members throughout the Cape Conference and that we push forward in the development of our coloured work as a separate Department, maintaining separate Church organisations⁹⁵

It is interesting to note the motivation given for this action. Because of the long-term effects of this action, the preamble to the vote taken is quoted in full:

WHEREAS our work among the Coloured people of the Cape Conference has shown very encouraging growth in certain sections of the field, and the prospects are bright for building up a much larger constituency in various parts of the Province as we extend and intensify our evangelistic programme, and



WHEREAS our Coloured believers have made the most marked progress in their own experience, and in Sabbath School, Missionary Volunteer and general Church activities, developing strong leaders and efficient Church officers in Churches organised for and officered [sic] by our Coloured believers under the direction of the Coloured Department⁹⁶

Coupled to this action was the recommendation that “the European members of the Wynberg Church transfer their membership for the time being to the [European] Claremont church”⁹⁷ A sequel to this is recorded on January 15, 1950 where the

⁹⁵ Cape Conference Executive Committee Minutes 594/165/1930.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

Wynberg Church (European) was voted into the Sisterhood of Churches in the Cape Conference.⁹⁸

The Cape Conference amalgamated with the Natal-Transvaal Conference in 1933 to form the South African Conference.⁹⁹ When the South African Conference divided again (1936) and “the old plan reverted to for the Natal-Transvaal Conference and Cape Conference to operate separately”¹⁰⁰ the Cape Conference resumes operations *sans* the Coloured Division. Thus the work in the Cape was now firmly segregated along racial lines.

The work amongst the Coloureds continued under the Cape Field from 1933 with White leadership.¹⁰¹ By 1959 the Field had “progressed” to where it was able to become self-supporting and self-governing. The Good Hope Conference was formed in December of 1959, under Coloured leadership and continued until the merger of the Good Hope Conference with the Southern Conference in 1997. This lead to the establishment of the Southern Hope Conference.

An attempt has been made by Du Preez and Du Pré to document the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church within the Coloured community. This is contained in two publications, viz., *A Century of Good Hope: A History of the Good Hope Conference, its Educational Institutions and Early Workers, 1893--1993*, and *Against the Odds: The Life and Times of Dr Ingram Frank du Preez* (attributed to

⁹⁸ Cape Conference Constituency Meeting Minutes of the 39th Business Session.

⁹⁹ Minutes of a meeting held at Bloemfontein at 2.30 p.m., April 23, 1933 of all available delegates of the Cape Conference together with workers of the Cape Conference and Workers of Institutions within that Field. 412/98/22. Recorded minutes for the Cape Conference subsequently continue from 1936. This meeting was held during a camp meeting being conducted at Bloemfontein.

¹⁰⁰ This note appears in the CC minutes between the 1933 and 1936 minutes.

¹⁰¹ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. I, 7.

Du Pré only). While the latter work is a biography of Dr I. F. du Preez, his life span, which covers the four organizational phases of the work amongst the Coloured population in South Africa, gives valuable insights into the development of the work. As an employee and leader in the Church, his story is closely aligned to the story of the Church in South Africa and thus proves helpful in understanding the history of the Coloured Church from “someone on the inside”.

The first publication covers the history of the origin of the work amongst the Coloured community, with special sections focusing on the educational work as well as the lives of some of the pioneer employees. Most of the material is dependent upon the recollections of I. F. du Preez.¹⁰² Volume II is enhanced by personal interviews conducted with the individuals cited and/or their family members.¹⁰³ It is no doubt a source of invaluable information. The book would have had much added value if primary documents and other individuals had been consulted as well to serve as corroborative evidence and had been referenced as such. Like R. C. L. Thompson and Swanepoel, Du Preez and Du Pré err in the assumption that the records do not exist, thus rendering their historical accounts incomplete.

A further publication of Du Preez and Du Pré is the biography of M. Z. Cornelius (1922—).¹⁰⁴ As with Du Preez, his experiences as an employee of the Church from 1948 till his retirement in 1982, along with his “voluntary” work from 1983-1993 gives another insider’s view on the work amongst the Coloured people in South Africa.

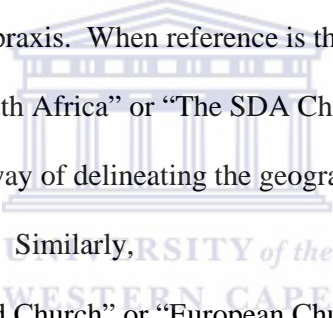
¹⁰² Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. I, x.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ I. F. du Preez, *Walking For Jesus: Michael Zacheus Cornelius: A Biography*.

This study will seek to address the issue: “What factors contributed to the different organizational phases that the predominantly ‘Coloured’ section of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church in South Africa underwent between 1887 and 1997?”

Definitions

- SDA Church in South Africa
 - The SDA Church considers itself to be a world-wide organization and thus does not consist of independent, national churches. Through its organizational structure, it seeks to maintain unity of theology and praxis. When reference is thus made to “The SDA Church in South Africa” or “The SDA Church in America” it is done so simply as way of delineating the geographical location of a sector of the Church. Similarly,
“The Coloured Church” or “European Church” or “Native Church” refers not to an independent, indigenous, church, but to a sector of the Church composed of members from a particular racial group.
 - When the word “Church” is used in this study on its own with a capital “C”, it refers to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The lower case “church” will be applied to a particular congregation, such as “The Salt River church.” Where the “Christian Church” is used, it will be in reference to Christianity in general.
- The dates used in stating the problem have been chosen for the following reasons:

- 1887 – The first missionaries arrived in 1887 and the first congregation was formed in that same year in Beaconsfield, Kimberley. The formation of that congregation is the first evidence of formal structure within the SDA Church in South Africa and would form the basis for further growth and development.
- 1997 – On September 13, 1997 at 9:23 p.m., at the first session of the merged Southern and Good Hope Conferences, the name “Southern Hope Conference” was chosen for the new organization.¹⁰⁵ This marked the end of a separate “Coloured” organization which had been in existence for sixty-four years, having merged the “Coloured Department” with the “Native Department”.
- The Organizational Phases are categorized as such:
 - 1887-1933: Early development from the formation of the first church to the establishment of the Cape Field in 1933.
 - 1933-1959: The Cape Field years.
 - 1959-1997: The Good Hope Conference years.
 - 1997 : The establishment of the Southern Hope Conference.
- Factors
 - The Cape Conference Executive Committee Minute of 1930 has a preamble giving the motivation for the action taken to set up a separate organization to administer the “Coloured Department.” These factors will be examined, along with other options. (See the discussion on “Hypothesis” below)

¹⁰⁵ Notes made by the researcher who was present at that meeting

- The study will thus not only document the phases, but will attempt to determine what the prime factor or factors was/were that gave rise to those phases and will seek to analyse these factors.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant for the following reasons:

1. As a contribution to historiography in general and church historiography in particular, this study will examine an aspect of the development of the SDA Church in South Africa with a strong focus on the parallel socio-economic and political developments taking place within the country as a whole. An argument will be made for the need to move away from “linear church history” to “inclusive church history”, emphasising that “church history” must not and cannot be removed from “history.”
2. The other studies done on the history of the Church in South Africa have not documented the development of the work amongst the Coloured community. This study seeks to make a contribution in that direction. It is not a definitive history on the Coloured work in South Africa. That task will be left for another time.
3. Individuals who were involved in leadership in the Church at the time of the formation of the Cape Field are no longer alive. Those who were involved in the latter years of the Cape Field and in the changeover to the Good Hope Conference are still around. Their contribution to the history of the Church has to be documented before they, too, pass on.
4. At a meeting of the Southern Africa Union Conference Executive Committee held during 1998 at which a submission by the Church to the

Truth and Reconciliation Commission was being discussed, of the White leaders present stated that “the SDA Church has never been involved in racial discrimination against its members.”¹⁰⁶ It is hoped that this study will assist the membership of the Church to not forget that racism is part of the history of this Church. It is further hoped that this recognition will lead to confession, forgiveness and reconciliation amongst its members; some as “victims” and others as “perpetrators.”

The Church in South Africa continues to struggle to come to terms with the separation that exists in the Church. On March 26, 2006, a proposed restructuring of the Trans-Orange Conference and the Transvaal Conference – two conferences covering, for the most part, the same geographical areas consisting of the Northwest, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Gauteng provinces – proved to be unsuccessful. Currently, the two conferences continue to serve side by side – a predominantly Black Church and a predominantly White Church.

Twelve of the churches in the Transvaal Conference took the Southern Africa Union Conference to the High Court in Bloemfontein on the 20th to the 23rd of January 2009. The objective – to seek relief from the action taken by the SAU

¹⁰⁶ Recollections of the researcher who was present at the meeting. Pastor Eddie Harris who at the time served as secretary to the Transvaal Conference, in particular, in reference to Helderberg College, stated that the institution never discriminated against persons of colour. History tells a different story. This will be dealt with in greater detail in the dissertation. Quoting from Du Pré in *Separate but Unequal*, xviii, the need for conscientizing the collective memory is emphasized: “As the years pass, the memory fades and apartheid will, in retrospect, no longer seem so evil. But, as Professor Kadar Asmal . . . said: ‘The struggle for human rights is a struggle against the misuse of power. It is also the struggle of memory against forgetting.’”

Constituency meeting who had taken the decision in 2005¹⁰⁷ that the restructuring should take place as described above.

In the opening statement by the advocate acting on behalf of the Transvaal Conference churches, a concluding remark was that the churches did not agree with an action that would cause the (minority) White members to have to join and be under the control of the (majority) Black members.¹⁰⁸ The court case was concluded on 8 September 2009. Judgement was handed down on 8 October 2009. The finding of the court was: Case dismissed. No order as to costs.¹⁰⁹

The Church continues to struggle to come to terms with and, to a certain extent, understand the deep divisions that have given risen to this kind of a standoff. Investigating, analyzing, interpreting and understanding the history of the development of the Church in South Africa could lead to a better grasp of the challenges faced by the Church today.¹¹⁰

Hypothesis

This study hypothesises that the different organizational phases in the development of the SDA Church amongst the Coloured Community of South Africa came about as a response of the Church to racism.

¹⁰⁷ SAU Constituency Meeting minutes, 20 November, 2005. The Session adopted the recommendation of the SAU EXCOM as recorded in SAU 379/115/05.

¹⁰⁸ Notes taken by researcher who was present in court as an observer in the public gallery.

¹⁰⁹ See Appendix IX

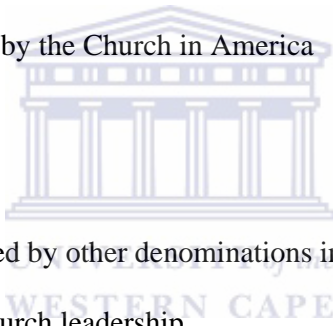
¹¹⁰ Land, “. . . historical knowledge is essential to understanding the present.” *The World of Ellen G. White*, 10.

Examples of why a response to racism is being proffered as the prime factor are:

1. The separation of congregations on the basis of colour *sans* any government or other external pressure
2. The grossly disparate salaries paid to employees from the different racial groups
3. The separate but unequal policies applied towards the establishing and operation of educational institutions
4. The application of “petty” apartheid

Factors which possibly contributed to racism within the Church are:

- a. The position adopted by the Church in America
- b. Colonialism
- c. The national milieu
- d. The patterns developed by other denominations in South Africa
- e. Racist attitudes of Church leadership



Other factors which can be suggested which led to the organizational changes are:

- i. Church Growth
 - a. The belief that “each person must minister unto his own people” and that separation would lead to increased growth of a particular sector of society
- ii. Leadership Development

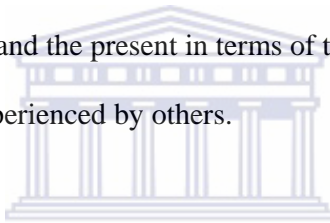
a. The belief that if the Coloureds were on their own, their leaders will have a chance to develop.¹¹¹

iii. The wish of the Coloured members

These, and other, factors will be examined in determining the veracity of the hypothesis.

Paradigm, Structure and Limitations

This study is conducted primarily within the qualitative paradigm. This paradigm is being selected as it attempts to allow the researcher to analyse, interpret and understand events in history and the present in terms of the experience and definition of the world as experienced by others.



As a qualitative study, the following approaches have been utilized:

- a. A literature study was conducted involving current literature and archival material on the subject.
- b. Qualitative interviews were conducted using both individual cultural interviews and individual topical interviews¹¹² with a sampling of lay members and church leaders involved in the organizational developments in 1959 and 1997.

The research will be set out as follows:

¹¹¹ This seems to be an anomaly, as the Cape Field, from 1933 through to the formation for the Good Hope Conference (1959), had only White presidents. Furthermore, Good Hope Training School and its successor, Good Hope College, had “White” principles from 1929 through to 1975, this, despite the fact that Coloured educators of experience and with the necessary qualifications served on the staff since the mid-50’s (Eddie May, BA, 1957; Ingram du Preez, BA, 1957, UED, 1959, MA, 1962).

¹¹² Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*, 195.

- (a) Chapter one serves as an introduction to the subject matter. It gives the reader a broad overview of the study and suggests certain directions that will be taken. It also attends to research methodology and other details pertinent to the research process
- (b) Chapter two provides a background on the SDA Church in South Africa.
- (c) Chapter three deals with the work of the Church in South Africa amongst the Coloured community. It examines the growth of the Church from its inception until the emergence of Cape Field of Seventh-day Adventists. It investigates the hypotheses that racism was the factor in this development. The study also examines other possible factors. The information has been sourced from the following:

- 
- a. Archives at Helderberg College Heritage Centre, Somerset West; Cape Conference, Somerset West; Southern Africa Indian-Ocean Division, Harare; Southern Africa Union Conference, Bloemfontein; Southern Hope Conference, Port Elizabeth; Kwa-Zulu Natal Free State Conference, Pine Town; Transvaal Conference, Turfontein, Jhb.
 - b. Theses by Pantalone, Swanepoel, Thompson and Velayadum.
 - c. Interviews with persons involved in the 1959 and 1997 developments
 - d. Articles in the various Church papers
 - e. Books by Du Preez and Du Pré and other publications as cited.

While the different Conference, Union and Division records are available for study, the absence of records in the individual congregations is of concern. However, as this is a study of the organizational phases of

development and thus applies more to the macro than the micro level, it has not proven to be an insurmountable problem. The researcher that chooses to study the development of a single congregation or group of churches will no doubt find this to be a great challenge.

A second concern has been the absence of any individuals who were part of the 1933 developments. The literature had to suffice.

(d) Chapter four further examine issues surrounding the formation of the Cape Field and the subsequent establishment and development of the Good Hope Conference in 1959. Once again, this transition is studied to determine if the hypothesis is valid. As in (c) the literature cited was utilised. In addition, interviews were conducted with of the role players who were part of the church leadership structure or were employers of the organization at the time of the transition.

(e) Chapter five examines the process that led to the merger of the Good Hope Conference and the Southern Conference to form the Southern Hope Conference. An important factor that is raised in this chapter is that the intention was that the merger was to involve a third party – the Cape Conference. Two major issues are thus examined in this section. Firstly, was the merger based on theological imperatives or political pressures? Secondly, was the non-merger by the Cape Conference with its sister conferences driven by racism, economics or theological considerations?

Particular focus is thus placed on the developments within the Cape Conference leading up to the partial merger in the Cape area in 1997.

- (f) Chapter six serves as the conclusion to the research in which the hypothesis is examined in the light of the study. A summary is provided, conclusions drawn and recommendations made, where applicable.

Dissemination of Information

The researcher envisages that:

- a. Copies of the bound dissertation will be made available for general reading as well as for further academic research. These will be placed in:
 - i. The library of the University of the Western Cape
 - ii. The library of Helderberg College
 - iii. The Heritage Centres, at Helderberg College, Andrews University and La Sierra University
 - iv. The library of Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI, USA.
- b. The dissertation will be published in book form for sale to members of the Church and other interested individuals. It will be distributed through the network of Adventist Book Centres spread throughout the world.
- c. the pertinent elements and findings of the study will be written up and submitted for publication in various relevant refereed journals

- d. a presentation will be made to the Church at its different levels of governance in South Africa
- e. Presentations will be made a relevant historical conferences
- f. lectures and talks will be given to local Churches
- g. The material will form part of a course in Church History taught at the theology department of Helderberg College.



CHAPTER TWO

THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA

This chapter will examine the establishment of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa. It will demonstrate its emergence within the context of the development of Christendom in the country. In addition, it will position the founding of the Seventh-day Adventist Church within the prevailing political and socio-economic milieu of the time.

As the Seventh-day Adventist Church was planted and took root in this country, its doctrinal development and the direction it took in formulating its practices and policies did not emerge in isolation. The doctrines taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church had been systematically developed between 1849 and 1887, by which time most of its fundamental teachings had been formulated.¹ The 1888 dispute over the issue of Righteousness by Faith was still a year away.² The major restructuring process with regard to church governance was still fourteen years away. The Seventh-day Adventist Church had adopted its name 27 years earlier and had been formally structured 24 years before taking root on African soil. It was a young, dynamic, expanding movement, reaching out to new lands. The realization

¹ Schwarz & Greenleaf, 160-174

² Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual, xix.

had slowly begun to dawn on the fledgling organization that it was to become a world-wide body.³

The first official missionary had been sent from America to Europe in 1874. Missionary work commenced in Australia a year later. The SDA Church had established a school in Egypt in 1879 under the direction of Dr H. P. Ripton, a recent convert from Italy. However this soon closed down due to riots in the city.⁴ It was not till 1913 that the first indigenous Church was established in that country.⁵

A Ghanaian by the name of Francis Dolphijn received Seventh-day Adventist reading material from a sailor in a passing ship in 1888. Through reading this literature, he became converted to Seventh-day Adventism. He corresponded with the leadership of the Church in America for four years, but it was not until 1892 that the first SDA minister visited that country. Two years later the first resident missionaries settled in Ghana – Adventism was said to have come to ‘darkest Africa.’⁶

When missionaries were sent to South Africa in 1887, it led to the establishment of the SDA Church in Africa – the first country on the continent to register a formal church organization under the auspices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

While no significant work had been done in propagating SDA doctrines elsewhere

³ Knight, *Lest We Forget*, 197. See the official website of the Seventh-day Adventist Church [www.adventist.org/world_church/facts and figures/history](http://www.adventist.org/world_church/facts_and_figures/history) [October, 2009].

⁴ http://adventist.org.au/about_adventists/history [September, 2009].

⁵ Land, *Historical Dictionary of Seventh-day Adventists*, 160.

⁶ Dictionary of Christian Biography, *Dolphijn, Francis*, http://www.dacb.org/stories/ghana/dolphijn_francis.html [August, 2009].

on the continent, the arrival of the SDA first missionaries in South Africa was by no means a case of them entering an un-Christianised country.

There were to be other areas of mission endeavour where emissaries of the Seventh-day Adventist Church were to engage in pioneering work by penetrating areas where Christendom was a totally foreign religion and ideology.⁷ North America, where the Seventh-day Adventist Church had its origins, was Christianized at the time of the inception of the Advent Movement and the early membership came out of the established churches of the day along with the disappointed Millerites.⁸ Later work carried out in Europe was also done among members of other Christian denominations.⁹ Part of the reason for this was that the Seventh-day Adventist Church saw itself as a revolutionary reform movement with the task of calling people out of “Babylon” – apostate religion that had departed from observance of true biblical teaching. Its function was to preach and convey “present truth” to a world within a short time due to the imminence of Christ’s second coming.¹⁰

Coming to South Africa, the Seventh-day Adventist found itself in a similar situation to that of North America and Europe – entering a country that was, to a large extent Christianized and, secondly, a country where the Adventist interest had been started, as in Europe, by lay persons.¹¹ As in America and Europe, it would

⁷ Knight, *Lest We Forget*, 207

⁸ *Ibid.*, 197.

⁹ Andrews saw his work as preaching to those who were already Christian. See Knight, *Lest We Forget*, 207.

¹⁰ Borge Schantz, cited in Knight, *Lest We Forget*, 207, observes that “mission to non-Christians was approved of and praised” by the Adventists, but “it was regarded as the task that other evangelical mission societies could take care of. When they brought people to Christ, the SDAs were committed to bringing them the last warning” and the distinctive Adventist doctrines.

¹¹ Knight, *Lest We Forget*, 206.

focus its attention on proselytization amongst the members of the established churches in South Africa.

In examining the emergence and establishment of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa, attention will be given to the different phases within South African history. These phases will also be examined within the context of the political and economic environment in which the Christian church, firstly, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church, secondarily, developed in this country.

These phases will comprise:

1. Pre-colonial South Africa
 2. Christianity Planted in South Africa
 3. Political Transitions
 4. Economic Development
- 
- The logo of the University of the Western Cape, featuring a classical building facade with columns and a pediment, with the text "UNIVERSITY of the WESTERN CAPE" below it.

PRE-COLONIAL SOUTH AFRICA

Surveys of South African history have adequately documented the early history of South Africa.¹² What is of particular significance in the work of the historians over the past few decades is the debunking of the notion of earlier South African historiography that:

- (1) the history of South Africa began when the Europeans settled here¹³ and;
- (2) the Settlers or “The White Invaders”¹⁴ came to an unoccupied territory – the “empty land” myth.¹⁵

¹² Worden, Welsh, Ross, L. Thompson, Hinchliff, Elphick, Giliomee and Mbenga, etc.

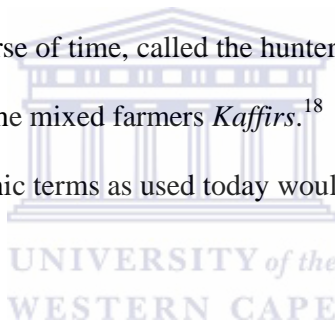
¹³ L. Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 1

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁵ Worden, 6.

Archaeological evidence combined with reports from early missionaries and explorers reflect “stable populations living in well-defined territories over long periods of time.”¹⁶ Furthermore, evidence is found of “sophisticated and successful populations employing with confidence a wide range of skills to support themselves in their chosen or inherited territories.”¹⁷

Three specific types of communities had emerged: The hunter-gatherers, the pastoralists and the mixed farmers. Each group occupied a specific territory suited to their occupations or *vice versa*, chose occupations suited to their territories. The European settlers, in the course of time, called the hunter-gatherers *Bushmen*, the pastoralists *Hottentots*, and the mixed farmers *Kaffirs*.¹⁸ These terms were used in a derogatory sense. The ethnic terms as used today would be *San*, *Khoikhoi* and *African*.¹⁹



By the time the White settlers arrived in the Cape Peninsula, the south-western section of the country was largely dominated by the hunter-gatherers and pastoralists, with the eastern, central and northern sections predominantly mixed farmers.²⁰ However, in the east, there were pockets of both hunter-gatherers and pastoralists.²¹

¹⁶ Ray Inskip cited in L. Thompson, 6.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁸ The term ‘Caffers’ was first used in the Cape by the Dutch to describe Asian full-breed men who served as a force of slaves who acted as the executive arm of the Fiscal. Imported in this form from Indonesia, it was later used by the British in the 19th century – probably linked to the original form as used by the Arabs to refer to non-Muslims or non-believers – where they applied it to all Africans on the Eastern frontier. See Giliomee and Mbenga, *New History of South Africa*, 54.

¹⁹ Thompson, L., 10.

²⁰ Giliomee and Mbenga, 20, 37.

²¹ Thompson, L., 29.

CHRISTIANITY PLANTED IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Portuguese Explorers

Christianity first reached South Africa with the arrival of the Portuguese sailors around the 15th century²² on what was called “voyages of discovery” by early South African historians. These voyages were part of the scramble of the European nations to find slaves, gold, ivory and other riches on the African continent and, later, a route to the sub-continent of India and other eastern countries.²³

Within a few years, the Portuguese demonstrated little further interest in the country, especially after the killing of Viceroy d’Almeida and fifty of his party in a battle at the Cape in 1510.²⁴ This was also due to the treacherous conditions around both the eastern and western coasts of South Africa.²⁵ They occupied no territory south of Luanda (on the west coast) and Mozambique (on the east coast).²⁶

The Vereenigde Oost-Indisch Compagnie

Besides the Portuguese, the Dutch, English, Scandinavian and French plied the route to Asia via the Cape of Good Hope, using it as a watering place and post office.²⁷ They bartered for sheep and cattle with the local Khoikhoi pastoralists in exchange for iron and copper goods.²⁸ However, it was not until 1652 that a European nation decided that South Africa presented a viable option as a

²² Welsh, *A History of South Africa*, 1. The date, 3 February, 1488, is cited as the first contact “between Europeans and the people of what is now South Africa.”

²³ Thompson, L., 31, 32.

²⁴ Welsh, 9

²⁵ Thompson, L., 2, 32

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Welsh, 10, 19.

²⁸ Thompson, L., 32

victualling²⁹ station for voyages to and from Asia.³⁰ The Vereenigde Oost-Indisch Compagnie (the Dutch East India Company, also known as the VOC³¹) sent a small party³² of Dutchmen under the command of Jan van Riebeeck to establish a trading post.³³

The VOC initially intended that the Cape be a trading post with the indigenous inhabitants, or “wild nations”,³⁴ being expected to provide the meat and produce needed for the long journey from Europe to their eastern empire centred in Batavia,³⁵ formerly known as Jakarta on the island of Java in Indonesia.³⁶

However, within ten years, it was realised that the trading post concept would not suffice. In order to provide for their long-term needs, the post had to be transformed into a full-blooded colony.³⁷

With this realization, the colony began to spread out. Slaves were brought in from Angola, Indonesia, Malaysia, Java, Madagascar, Mozambique and further up the east coast of Africa.³⁸ Under Governor Simon van der Stel, new areas were opened up for settlement.³⁹

²⁹ Ibid., 32, 38. Giliomee and Mbenga, 42, states: “It was to exist for the Company’s benefit and the interest of the mother country.”

³⁰ Welsh, 20.

³¹ Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*, 21.

³² Hinchliff, 2. He mentions there being 80 persons with Van Riebeeck.

³³ Ibid., 20.

³⁴ Giliomee and Mbenga, 42.

³⁵ Giliomee and Mbenga, 41.

³⁶ Thompson, L., 33. After 1949 the Dutch relinquished control over Batavia and the name of the capital of Java reverted back to Jakarta.

³⁷ Ross, 22

³⁸ Loff, *Bevryding tot Eenwording: Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sendingkerk in Suid-Afrika 1881-1994*, 36.

³⁹ Hinchliff, 6.

The Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (Dutch Reformed Church – DRC)

The arrival of Van Riebeeck and his party on April 6, 1652, heralded the Christian Church's official appearance in South Africa.⁴⁰ Van Riebeeck saw himself, as part of his brief, as the champion of the Reformed faith in the Cape, even attempting to enforce attendance at church through legislation.⁴¹ The Reformed Church was the only church the Company permitted.⁴² However, the VOC did not seem to have any formal intention for the advancement of the church, as between 1652 and 1655 the only spiritual service to the trading post was a "sick-comforter" who could provide no more than limited services.⁴³

The presence of the church in South Africa did not imply that there was any intention of Christianizing the outpost. The theological thinking of the church in Holland dictated that missionary endeavour was not high on the list of priorities:

- Calvin held the view that it was wrong for a layman to baptize, thus the presence of only a "sick-comforter" for the first three years of the settlement indicated that there was no intention for any proselytizing to be done;
- The Synod of Dordt (1618 -- 1619) had declared that children of heathen were not to be baptized even if they were to be taken into Christian households, thus the indigenous off-spring (either from indigenous parents or as a result of European/indigenous liaisons) were not initially considered candidates for baptism;
- The baptism of uninstructed heathen was unlawful.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Loff, 17. See also Hinchliff, *The Church in South Africa: Church History Outlines*, 1.

⁴¹ Giliomee and Mbenga, 46.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 45.

⁴³ Hinchliff, 3.

⁴⁴ Loff, 37.

Thus “the whole weight of Reformed tradition was opposed to any missionary haste.”⁴⁵

In 1655 the first full-time minister, Johan van Arckel, was appointed to serve the church. With the subsequent formation of a church board, the church had formally been established at the Cape.⁴⁶ The first church building was completed in 1704.⁴⁷

British Occupation of the Cape

After an agreement between the exiled Prince William of Orange and the British, an occupying force was sent to take possession of the Cape – with or without the permission of the Dutch Governor.⁴⁸ Meeting up with a disgruntled and dispirited Dutch citizenry at the Cape, the British “conquered” the Cape in 1795⁴⁹ with little resistance.⁵⁰ The administration of the Cape thus passed into British hands. Eight years later, it passed back into the hands of the Batavian Republic in 1803, as per the agreement with Prince William,⁵¹ but was re-occupied by the British in three years later in 1806.⁵²

While the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk still maintained strong links with the government, it no longer enjoyed the status of being the only official church of the colony. The British imported a number of Scottish ministers. Other denominations

⁴⁵ Hinchliff, , 4.

⁴⁶ Loff, 21.

⁴⁷ Giliomee and Mbenga, 46.

⁴⁸ Welsh, 89.

⁴⁹ Ross, 35

⁵⁰ Welsh, 87

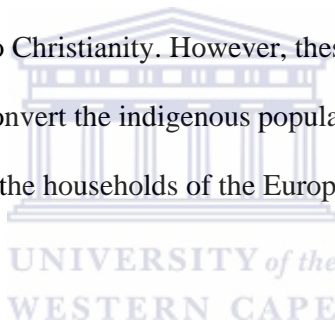
⁵¹ Ibid., 89

⁵² Ross, 35.

were also slowly introduced in the Cape. Amongst these were the Lutherans and the Catholics. As with the Reformed Church, their primary objective was to minister to their members who were already present in the Colony.

With the advent of imported slaves from the East, along with exiles and convicts, Islam was also introduced to the country.⁵³ Thus the ecclesiastical landscape began to be quite diverse.

Children of slaves, often born as a result of cohabitation between master and servant, were being baptized into the church, as were adult converts from amongst the non-Christian religions to Christianity. However, these accessions were not part of a conscientious drive to convert the indigenous population, but rather incidental accessions linked directly to the households of the European colonists.⁵⁴



Missionary Expansion

The arrival of George Schmidt in 1736 introduced a new dimension into the Cape – that of mission endeavour directed specifically at the indigenous people. A Moravian, Schmidt was granted permission to settle in Baviaanskloof – modern Genadendal, about 130 km’s east of Cape Town – where he worked amongst the Khoikhoi people with limited success.⁵⁵ He proved to be the forerunner of many other missionaries who came to South Africa. Ross states that by the early 19th

⁵³ Giliomee and Mbenga, 69.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 57.

⁵⁵ Ross, 36.

century so many missionaries had come to the Cape that it could be stated that, at that time, it was “the most heavily missionised area in the world.”⁵⁶

By the middle of the 19th century Christianity had become firmly rooted in South Africa with the majority of its European inhabitants being members of one of the denominations. Mission activity had carried on apace and a large proportion of the indigenous population had become adherents of the Christian faith, or, at the very least, had been exposed to Christianity. A list compiled by Franco Frescura conservatively indicates that more than 500 mission stations had been established by the 19th century.⁵⁷

The Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk underwent significant changes in structure. In 1881 the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Sending Kerk (Dutch Reformed Mission Church) was formed as a daughter church to the DRC.⁵⁸ This “mission church” was set up as a separate body catering for its members who had entered the church through mission expansion amongst the Non-White population of South Africa. Separate churches for Coloureds and Blacks were set up. Eventually Coloured membership remained in the DRMC with the Black membership banding together to form the DRCA – The Dutch Reformed Church in Africa.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Ross, 36. Du Plessis, J. *A History of Christian Missions in South Africa*, cited in Isichei, E. *A History of Christianity in Africa from Antiquity to the Present*, 100, refers to the early 20th century in the same way: “South Africa may well claim to being, with the possible exception of the South Sea Islands, the best occupied mission field in the world.”

⁵⁷ Frescura, *Index of the Names of Mission Stations Established in the Southern African Region During the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*.

⁵⁸ See <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/regions/africa/south-africa/uniting-reformed-church-in-southern-africa.html> [August, 2009].

⁵⁹ Ibid. Elphick and Davenport, 151, explain that the church was first formed as the NGK Bantu Church of SA (1951) and later the NGKA in 1961.

Reasons given for the split were that:

1. It would enable people to worship in their own language
2. It would allow for development of leadership amongst the indigenous peoples
3. It would allow persons to worship within their peculiar cultural contexts.

It is significant to note that, *de jure*, the DRC originally had no separation based on colour. In fact, right up till 1829, the synod formally rejected discrimination on the basis of skin colour.⁶⁰ However, *de facto*, from the inception of Christianity at the Cape, people of colour were discriminated against, particularly at worship services and Holy Communion. When slaves and Hottentots were baptized, they attended the church with the colonists, but were expected to sit on the floor or, at least, towards the back of the church in specially built pews.⁶¹ Reasons put forward for this are that there were cultural differences that had to be recognized and preserved. Secondly, the notion that the hierarchy had to be maintained between “civilised” Europeans and the “lesser” cultures of Africa and the imported slaves. The master/servant relationship had to be preserved: masters were White, servants were not White. In this was embedded the seeds of racism – the concept of one group being inherently superior to another, delineated primarily by colour and, secondarily, by language and culture.

⁶⁰ See <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/regions/africa/south-africa/uniting-reformed-church-in-southern-africa.html> [August, 2009].

⁶¹ Giliomee and Mbenga, 57.

The English Churches

The membership of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk was drawn almost exclusively from those whose language was originally Dutch, German, French and, later, Afrikaans. In contrast to the DRC, the Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians and Catholics initially drew their membership largely from those with an English speaking background.

The view is held by some South Africans that the ideology of separation – later known as *Apartheid* – was underpinned by an Afrikaans speaking Dutch Reformed Church. While there is no doubt that the DRC played a prominent role in shaping and justifying a belief-system that shored up the Nationalist Government, the predominantly English speaking churches need to examine the role they played in shaping the thinking of South Africans as well.

A development within the English-speaking churches of the 19th century is worth noting. The direction taken in the socio-economic and political environment which was mirrored by the DRC through the separation into different racially constituted organizations by 1881 was replicated, to a large degree, by the English-speaking churches.

The Presbyterians

The Presbyterian Church, a Calvinist, Reformed Church brought to South Africa through Scottish soldiers in 1806, split into two organizations – the Presbyterian Church *in* South Africa and the Presbyterian Church *of* South Africa. Those seemingly insignificant two-letter prepositions placed a chasm based on race

between the White and the Black membership. It was only in 1999 that this was reversed with the amalgamation of the two bodies to form The Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa.⁶²

The Catholics

Under both the Dutch (1652 – 1795) and, initially the British (1795-1803), Catholicism was prohibited from establishing a presence in South Africa: this despite the Catholic Church claiming contact with Southern Africa through Vasco da Gama and Bartholomew Diaz. It was not until the appointment of Bishop Raymond Griffith as third Vicar Apostolic of the Cape and first bishop of South Africa in 1837 that the history of the Catholic Church as a visible institution began.

In 1847, the Eastern Cape Vicariate was created. Then, in 1852, the first missionary of the newly-founded congregation of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, arrived. After many obstacles in founding missions, in 1861, Bishop Jean-Francois Allard travelled to Lesotho where he obtained a mission station from the King Moshoeshoe, the founder of the Basotho nation. This mission was to become one of the strongest Catholic communities in Africa.

However, very little had been done for the indigenous people in South Africa. Two seminaries for the organization were established in 1947 and 1948 – one for Blacks, the other for Whites.

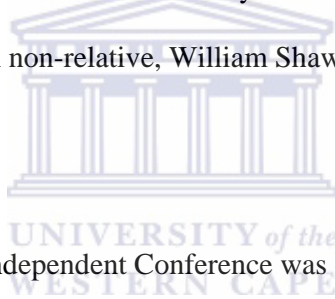
⁶² http://www.upcsa.org.za/about_us.htm [July, 2009].

The official website of the Catholic Church decries its racial separation with this statement:

Like most Christian Churches, the Catholic Church was relatively slow in opposing apartheid. It laboured at the cost of the heritage of segregation that it had shared with the rest of the Church in most pre-liberation colonial situations. . . . Within the Church itself, a *de facto* discrimination was practiced at many levels.⁶³

The Methodists

The Methodist Church arrived in South Africa, as did the Presbyterians, via the military. British Methodist soldiers came to the Cape as part of the 2nd Occupation 1806. However, the work of the church was really launched by Barnabas Shaw who reached the Cape in 1816. A non-relative, William Shaw, accompanied the British settlers of 1820.



It was only in 1927 that an independent Conference was constituted and subsequently enlarged in 1931 to include the Transvaal Missionary District of the British Conference and “the small Primitive Methodist Mission.”⁶⁴

While the Methodist Church states that it deplored all forms of racism and White supremacy right from the beginning, schisms based on race developed, with the leadership of the church in its early years ensconced firmly in the hands of the Whites. It was not until 1964 that the first Black was appointed as head of the Methodist Church in South Africa. To the church’s credit, it issued a statement in 1958, when “[f]aced by strong government pressure to divide along racial lines, [it]

⁶³ http://www.sacbc.org.za/Site/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=196&Itemid=194 [September, 2009].

⁶⁴ <http://www.methodist.org.za/history> [September, 2009].

declared ‘its conviction that it is the will of God for the Methodist Church that it should be one and undivided, trusting to the leading of God to bring this ideal to ultimate fruition’”.⁶⁵

The French Huguenots

The revocation of the Edict of Nantes⁶⁶ had unleashed a wave of persecution in France against the Calvinist Reformed Church. Many of the Huguenots fled to the Netherlands after 1685. However, when the initial offer was made to the Huguenots to settle in South Africa, they were reluctant. But few came of their own volition. While their own intention was to escape persecution, the Dutch were hoping they could swell the farming capacity of the Colony. The subsidised mass emigration of French Huguenots to the Cape commenced in 1688/9 and reached its climax by 1692, where a total of two hundred and one French Huguenots had arrived in the Cape. By 1729 there were 279 French and their descendents living in the Cape of Good Hope.⁶⁷

The manner in which they were handled demonstrated that the Dutch Church was expected to be the Church of the entire colony. The VOC had promised the Huguenots that they could have their own minister. This was acceded to. However, when he retired, his replacement was instructed to preach in the official language – Dutch. When a separate congregation was formed, political commissioners were to attend its meetings, and all important matters had to be

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 33, 34.

⁶⁷ Coertzen, P. In *The Arrival and Establishment of the Huguenots at the Cape of Good Hope* www.geocities.com/huguenotblad/histSA [August, 2009].

referred to the church authorities in Cape Town.⁶⁸ The notion that “the religion of the government ought to be the religion of the people”⁶⁹ was well-entrenched in the government of the day.⁷⁰

The Huguenots were absorbed into the Dutch Culture to the extent that very little trace is left of French influence in South Africa, apart from the legacy of family names of French origin⁷¹ and the names given to some towns. Within one generation of their arrival, any distinct French religious activity had been effectively nullified. The French language ceased to exist as home language.⁷² After 1707 the language was banned in official communication with the Dutch authorities.⁷³



POLITICAL TRANSITIONS

The VOC (The Dutch East India Company)

Political and constitutional development of the modern South Africa can trace its origins to the arrival of Van Riebeeck as the representative of the VOC.⁷⁴

In order for the Cape to move from being a trading post to a colony, the Dutch had to, firstly, take control of the land occupied by the indigenous transhumant pastoral

⁶⁸ Hinchliff, 6.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Although only fewer than 300 Huguenots settled in South Africa, it is remarkable how many descendants of the French made an impact on the development of the country. Names like those that follow are derived from the original French names and appear in the most popular spelling found today: Blignaut, Cilliers, Cronje, de Buis, Delpont, de Villiers, du Preez, du Plessis, du Toit, Fourie, Fouche, la Grange, Hugo, Jacobs, Joubert, Jordaan, de Klerk, Labuschagne, de Lange, le Roux, Lombaard, Malan, Malherbe, Marais, Meinard, Meyer, Mouton, Naude, Nel, Pellesier, Pienaar, Retief, Rossouw, Roux, Terreblanche, Theron, Viljoen, Vivier.

<http://www.hugenoot.org.za/surname.htm> [September, 2009]

⁷² Thompson, L., 35.

⁷³ Coertzen

⁷⁴ Ross, 21.

occupants of south western Africa and, more particularly, the Cape Peninsula – the Khoikhoi.⁷⁵ Following the visits of Vasco da Gama, these pastoralists had become accustomed to trading with the Europeans. Thus during the early years of the Dutch invasion, relationships were cordial between the invaders and the occupiers of the Peninsula who numbered between four and eight thousand.⁷⁶

The Company instructed the officials at the Cape to develop cooperative relationships with the leaders of the Khoikhoi in order to ensure a favourable climate for cattle trade.⁷⁷ They negotiated with them primarily through three of their members with whom they had developed friendships, called Autshumato (Harry), Krotoa (Eva) and Doman.⁷⁸ However, as the Khoikhoi began to observe the steady development of the settlement – an activity which the earlier traders had not engaged in – with the building of the fort and the planting of fruit trees which had a strong sense of permanence attached to it, they became uneasy with the situation.⁷⁹ As early as 1659, tensions developed, with the Khoikhoi raiding settler farms and capturing cattle and sheep.⁸⁰ However, within a year the settlers were able to establish control. This they did by force through the superiority of the gun.⁸¹ Subsequently, over a period of time, the Khoikhoi were cowed into subjection. Their land, flocks and herds were seized, thereby reducing the influence and power of the Khoikhoi leadership,⁸² who, by the early 18th century, had become “pathetic

⁷⁵ Du Pré, *Separate but Unequal*, 12

⁷⁶ Thompson, L., 36.

⁷⁷ Giliomee and Mbenga, 42.

⁷⁸ Thompson, L., 37; Giliomee and Mbenga, 42.

⁷⁹ Giliomee and Mbenga, 50

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁸¹ Terreblanche, 8.

⁸² Ross, 22.

clients of the Company.”⁸³ Eventually, through a series of “Hottentot” wars, they were forced into a position of subservience and virtual slavery.⁸⁴

In relation to the impact on the Khoikhoi community, Richard Elphick sums it up thus:

The Company and the settlers in combination . . . assaulted all five components of independence together: [they] absorbed livestock and labour from the Khoikhoi economy, subjugated Khoikhoi chiefs to Dutch overrule and their followers to Dutch law, encroached on Khoikhoi pastures, and endangered the integrity of Khoikhoi culture.⁸⁵

Through the smallpox epidemic that ravaged the Khoikhoi in 1713, the already fragile community was well nigh obliterated.⁸⁶

Secondly, a social order was established consisting of different levels. These Ross describes as follows:⁸⁷

1. the masters, who were the European Colonialists;
2. the slaves, brought in from Angola, Indonesia, India, Madagascar and the east coast of Africa,⁸⁸ and;
3. the Khoikhoi, who had, due to varying circumstances, come to work within the Colonial structures.⁸⁹

⁸³ Thompson, L., 37.

⁸⁴ Du Pré, 13. Giliomee and Mbenga, 52, 53.

⁸⁵ Richard Elphick, *Khoikhoi and the Founding of White South Africa*, Johannesburg, 1985. Cited in Thompson, L., 38.

⁸⁶ Elphick. Cited in L. Thompson, 38.

⁸⁷ Ross, 23.

⁸⁸ Ibid. Thompson, L., 35.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

This social order might not have implied segregation on racial grounds, but it does appear as though a hierarchical social order was established based on master/servant relationships which coincided with skin colour: those in positions of authority were White; those in positions of subservience were Black. L Thompson retains a three-level social order as well, but places them in this order:

1. Free Burghers
2. Company Slaves
3. The indigenous pastoralists -- the Khoikhoi who, through the expansion of the Dutch colony, had the option of withdrawing from the peninsula or becoming servants or clients of the Dutch.⁹⁰

Giliomee and Mbenga portray the social order based on four tiers:

1. Company servants
2. Free Burgers
3. Slaves
4. Khoisan



The first two groups were free; the third subject to the free peoples; and the fourth was not initially considered as being under Dutch rule.⁹¹ The four categories as listed by Giliomee and Mbenga mirrors the tripartite structure outlined by L Thompson and Ross through the categorization of the inhabitants of the Cape into

⁹⁰ Thompson, L., 33.

⁹¹ Giliomee and Mbenga, 45.

settlers, slaves and indigenous Khoikhoi. The slaves, almost exclusively foreigners, were initially placed on a different level to that of the Khoikhoi.⁹²

It was only later that the colonists came into contact with the mixed farmers of the region – the Africans. After the emancipation of the slaves and their being grouped with the Khoikhoi, a revised structure emerged as greater contact with the Africans ensued: White colonists or invaders; mixed or Coloured persons; Africans. This tripartite structure⁹³ was to remain part of the South African social and political landscape for centuries to come.⁹⁴

With the land and the peoples of the Cape under their control, the VOC could begin to establish its authority as an occupying force. A primitive, crude form of “Group Areas” was introduced with a hedge of wild almonds (from the mouth of the Salt River, through to Kirstenbosch) serving as a boundary between Khoikhoi and White.⁹⁵

⁹² As discussed later, the emancipation of the slaves placed them within the grouping called “Coloured” which consisted of the remnants of the Khoikhoi, the emancipated slaves and the products of cohabitation who were rejected by the White community.

⁹³ Ross, 23.

⁹⁴ An extreme example of this is how it played itself out much later in 1984 when a new constitution was adopted providing for a tricammal parliament consisting of three houses – White, Coloured and Indian. The Blacks were excluded, ostensibly provided for by the administrations of the independent homelands.

⁹⁵ Du Pré, *Separate but Unequal*, 13. L. Thompson, 37. A part of this hedge can still be seen in Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens. The wild almond hedge must not be confused with the almond tree. The wild almond or *bitteramandel*, scientifically classified as *brabejum stellatifolium*, was poisonous, even though the Khoikhoi had found a way to neutralize the poison in the plant. An uncultivated strip was allowed to develop along the row of wild almonds to encourage the growth of brambles and other vegetation which eventually would form a dense, impenetrable hedge, thus providing a barrier for people and animals to pass through. This was not a foreign concept to the Dutch, as it was a practice imported from Holland where land owners planted hedges or dug ditches to demarcate the boundary to their properties and to prevent animals entering or leaving their property. <http://www.plantzafrica.com/plantab/brabejstell.htm>, http://www.biodiversityexplorer.org/plants/proteaceae/brabejum_stellatifolium.htm [September, 2009].

This “tripartite structure” could be found in the South African political and social landscape up to the latter part of the 20th century, with successive governments, up to the early 90’s, doing all in their power to maintain this relationship. Especially in the 20th century, residential areas, schools, medical services, marriages and sexual relationships were influenced by the desire to keep the different groups separate.

This was seen in the church structures as well. In the DRC four separate churches had been created – The DRC for Whites, the Dutch Reformed Mission Church (DRMC) for Coloureds, the Reformed Church in Africa for Indians (RCA) and the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (DRCA) for Blacks⁹⁶; the Seventh-day Adventist Church had followed suite, with one National Body, the Southern Union, for its Black membership, and a National Body, the South African Union, for Whites, Coloureds and Indians. The South African Union and the Southern Union were composed of Conferences – all the conferences under the Southern Union were Black. Under the South African Union there were separate conferences or fields for Whites, Coloureds and Indians. By 1991, there was only one National Body, but the structures on Conference level was still based on the tripartite structure. Salaries, facilities and structures were disproportionately distributed and, to varying degrees, still are.⁹⁷

By 1707 the population of the Dutch Colony had grown to around 700 Company employees, a settler community of 2000 men, women and children, the slave

⁹⁶ Formed in 1859. See "Dutch Reformed Church in Africa." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. 2009. Encyclopædia Britannica Online. 03 Aug. 2009. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/174605/Dutch-Reformed-Church-in-Africa> [September, 2009].

⁹⁷ This will be dealt with in greater detail in later chapters.

community and the pastoralists.⁹⁸ Of the settlers, which included mainly Dutch, German and French, the majority came from the “lower and least successful classes” in what was, at that time, a European society based on a hierarchical system.⁹⁹ Most of the single males who settled at the Cape were “illiterate or semi-literate peasants or labourers” brought to the Cape by the Company as sailors or soldiers.¹⁰⁰ In their new country, their previous station in life was not a factor. The converse could be stated; due to the tripartite structure, they suddenly found themselves at the top of the pile.

In addition, Van Riebeeck, influenced by what prevailed in Batavia and other Dutch colonies, requested from the Council permission to import slaves to the Cape. Thus, this already artificially-created society added an additional level by becoming a slaveholding society, with the first slaves being brought to the Cape in 1658.¹⁰¹ The relationship between the Colonists and the slaves were based on a relationship of the “fact and threat of violence,”¹⁰² with many slave-owners enforcing their authority with frequent use of the whip.¹⁰³ Slave labour was not one of many forms of labour in the Colony – it served as *the* source of labour. The Europeans, regardless of their previous station in life, became ‘gentlemen’ who preferred to be ‘served rather than serve.’ The master-slave model thus became the model for all other relationships.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁸ Thompson, L., 34.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Giliomee and Mbenga, 47.

¹⁰¹ Thompson, L., 35. According to Ross, between the arrival of the Dutch and the end of the slave trade in 1807, about 60 000 slaves were imported into the Cape. Ross, 23. Giliomee and Mbenga puts the total at 65 000. Giliomee and Mbenga, 47.

¹⁰² Ibid., 42

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Giliomee and Mbenga, 47, 62, 67.

What needs to be noted is that the slave population, unlike the American one which consisted almost exclusively of slaves imported from West Africa, consisted of very few Africans. While there were a few Mozambicans, there were many more from Madagascar, and still more from Sri Lanka, India and Indonesia. Through these slaves, Islam was introduced to the Cape.¹⁰⁵

The indigenous population was not enslaved by the Dutch Colonists although the practice and policy of indentured labour reduced this group to a *de facto* state of slavery.¹⁰⁶ The subjection and subjugation of the indigenous population – the Khoikhoi, the San and the African – arose from the economic principle of competition by different communities for the same set of scarce resources and commodities. Where the indigenous population chose to become part of the colonial economy, a symbiotic, non-oppressive relationship initially developed. “Free blacks” enjoyed the same political and social status as the settler community up until 1790 when their freedom was restricted through the implementation of Pass Laws.¹⁰⁷

What had emerged by the end of the VOC rule in 1795 was a segregated society involving White supremacy over the Khoikhoi, San, African Bantu-speaking persons, slaves and the newly-emerging mixed population. A coincidence of the lines of class and race had developed.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Thompson, L., 35

¹⁰⁶ For the Voortrekker, the *inboekeling* was indentured labour wholly beneficial to Africans, especially children who were left in a state of destitute after a ‘tribal war’, because they gained employment and were able to sustain their lives. For the Cape Colony and missionaries and philanthropists, the *inboekeling* system was slavery.
<http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/artsmediaculture/culture%20&%20heritage/indian-history/arrival2.htm> [September, 2009].

¹⁰⁷ Thompson, L., 36.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 45.

With regard to the mixed population, there had been quite a few marriages between the European men and the freed slave women.¹⁰⁹ However, there were numerous sexual liaisons across the status and colour lines. Some of these were institutional – the Slave Lodge in which the Company slaves were kept, was visited by the European settler employees of the Company for one hour each night, at which time the Lodge became “an active brothel for the local garrison.”¹¹⁰ Many sailors fathered numerous children by slave women. Of the Free Burgers had children from the slave and Khoikhoi women in their households. The progeny of these slave-settler extramarital sexual encounters became slaves.

However, there were women of mixed descent who became mistresses and, in some cases, wives to the Free Burgers, leading to a “lightening” of the Black population and a “darkening” of the European population.¹¹¹ Giliomee and Mbenga state that in the early years children born outside wedlock from “unions of non-European parents” were accepted into the European community – many of them become the progenitors of prominent *Afrikaner* families.¹¹² Heese estimates that up to 7% of *Afrikaner* genes originated outside of Europe – as a result of the mixing which took place within the Company years and beyond.¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 44. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, 18,19.

¹¹⁰ Giliomee and Mbenga, 53.

¹¹¹ Thompson, L., 44

¹¹² Giliomee and Mbenga, 59.

¹¹³ Heese, *Die Herkoms van die Afrikaner*, 17-20. Of interest to note is that “Simon van der Stel, who became Commander of the Cape in 1679, was himself the product of such an intermixture. His mother, Maria Lievens, was born in Batavia, the daughter of a Dutch sea captain and Monica da Costa, an indigenous woman from the East.” Giliomee and Mbenga, 44. The town, Stellenbosch, is named after him. Through Stellenbosch University, much of *Afrikaner* ideology emanated – from a University named after a person of colour.

By the 18th century many of the Free Burgers had turned to pastoralism and hunting. These semi-migratory European farmers became known as *trekboers*.¹¹⁴ Initially the Company tried to impede their expansion beyond the Peninsula and the escarpment. Later it adopted a system of land-tenure in order to encourage the supply of meat and pastoral products. For the payment of a small fee, the White farmer would be given a 6 000-acre farm. While this was considered a “loan” farm, they achieved *de facto* ownership, with sale, transfer and inheritance rights.¹¹⁵ Thus began the process of systematically parcelling off the land which for centuries had been the traditional home of the Khoikhoi, San and African.¹¹⁶

Giliomee and Mbenga list this practice – loan farms with its concomitant unsystematic colonisation – as one of the significant factors that incrementally and inexorably lead to White supremacy. Two other factors which contributed to this were the preference of using slaves as labourers and endorsing the practice of leaving agricultural production in the hands of the free burgers.¹¹⁷

These *trekboers* lived very isolated and somewhat primitive lives. A return trip from Graaf Reinet to the Cape could take up to 3 months, thus creating few opportunities for social mixing with the cosmopolitan Cape Town. Schools did not exist; literacy depended on transmission within the family – and in many instances this was not maintained. The first minister did not arrive in the Swartland (Malmesbury) until 1745 and in Graaf Reinet in 1795.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Thompson, L., 45

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 46.

¹¹⁶ Terreblanche, 10

¹¹⁷ Giliomee and Mbenga, 60.

¹¹⁸ Thompson, L., 47

Due to their isolation, their European culture became diluted. Hendrik Swellengrebel, the son of a former governor of the colony, gave this description of *trekboer* living conditions after touring the Colony in 1776 –77:

As far as Swellendam and Mossel Bay and occasionally as far as the Zeekoei River, one finds quite respectable houses with a large room partitioned into 2 or 3, and with good doors and windows, though mostly without ceilings. For the rest, however, and especially those at a greater distance, they are only tumble-down barns, 40 feet by 14 or 15 feet, with clay walls four feet high, and a thatched roof. These are mostly undivided; the doors are reed mats; a square hole serves as a window. The fireplace is a hole in the floor, which is usually made of clay and cow dung. There is no chimney; merely a hole in the roof to let the smoke out. The beds are separated by a Hottentot reed mat. The furniture is in keeping. I have found up to three households – children included – living together in such a building. The majority, by far, of the farmers from the Overberg come to Cape Town only one a year, because of the great distance – I have discovered that some are reckoned to live 40 ‘schoften’ or days’ journey away – and because of the difficulty of getting through the kloofs between the mountains. To cross them they need at least 24 oxen, two teams of 10 to be changed at every halt and at least 4 spares to replace animals that are crippled or fall prey to lions. Two Hottentots are necessary as well as the farmer himself. The load usually consist of 2 vats of butter (1 000 lb in all) and 400 to 500 lbs of soap.¹¹⁹

These *trekboers* were part of the emerging *Afrikaners*¹²⁰ of South Africa who later saw this country as part of their God-given legacy – a covenantal heritage as sacred

¹¹⁹ Cited in Thompson, L., 47

¹²⁰ See Giliomee and Mbenga, 62, for a discussion on Hendrik Biebow, the first White person recorded as using this term to refer to himself as an *Afrikaner*. Up to that point, the term had been used to describe locally born slaves, free blacks and the Khoikhoi. When he used the term, he was identifying himself, not as one of European descent, or as a Christian or a White person, but as an African – one who was from this continent – a true *Afrikaner*. See also Giliomee and Mbenga, 53,

as the covenant between God and Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses. Under this “covenant” they saw it as their right to subjugate, legislate for and rule over the original inhabitants of South Africa.¹²¹ They considered themselves to be the “defenders of the land.”¹²²

British Occupation

Fearing French control of the strategic Cape of Good Hope during the Napoleonic wars of the late 18th century, Britain, by then a dominant sea power, toppled the VOC forces at the Cape and took control in 1795.

They inherited a socio-economic-political system which they were not keen on tampering with.¹²³ Their prime interest in the Cape was the same as that of the Dutch – it was merely a stepping stone to Asia.¹²⁴ Under the treaty of Amiens, the Dutch – then constituted as the Batavian Republic – once again assumed control of the Cape in 1803. This was short-lived, however, with the British taking occupation again in 1806. In the Anglo-Dutch peace settlement of 1814, European consensus was reached, leaving the British as the unchallenged rulers in South Africa.¹²⁵

While established as the rulers in the colony, the British government was intent on servicing the route to the East. They did not exhibit great interest in expanding the

in which it is indicated that the British applied the term “Afrikanders” or “Afrikaners” to the offspring of European and slave liaisons.

¹²¹ A historical novel, *The Covenant* by James Michener gives valuable insight into the concept of “covenant” within Afrikaner thinking.

¹²² Giliomee and Mbenga, 49.

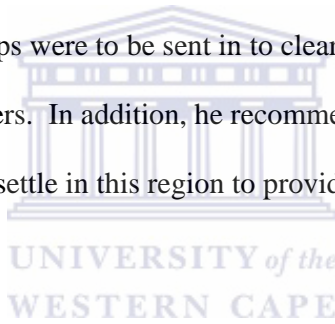
¹²³ Thompson, L., 53

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

colony or developing much economic activity. Although the declining socio-economic conditions in England resulted in widespread unemployment, with many emigrants leaving Britain, only a tiny proportion came to South Africa prior to 1870.¹²⁶ The administrative force at the Cape was also kept to a minimum and the administration was encouraged to restrict expenses.

Soon after the 2nd Occupation the British authorities attempted to establish peace in the turbulent eastern frontier region. Colonel Richard Collins was appointed to investigate this area in 1809. His recommendation was that the Europeans and Xhosa be kept strictly apart until the British were able to establish dominance in the area.¹²⁷ Until such time, troops were to be sent in to clear the border area between the Fish and Keiskamma rivers. In addition, he recommended that settlers should be imported from Europe to settle in this region to provide a buffer between the Colony and the Xhosa.¹²⁸



As a result of high the unemployment in Britain, part of Collins' recommendations was fulfilled in 1820 with the arrival of nearly 4 000 men, women and children – commonly referred to as the 1820 Settlers. These settlers – most of whom had had no farming experience and were largely from the lower middle classes – did not know that they were being utilised as a buffer by the government.¹²⁹ They were totally oblivious to the fact that they had been settled on land that had been wrested by force from the Xhosa nation.

¹²⁶ Ibid. This changed dramatically after the discovery of diamonds and gold in South Africa.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 54

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

A further dynamic arose from the implementation of the Collins Plan. With the introduction of those who had been suffering from unemployment in Britain, an artificially created community was introduced to the Colony who “were different in language, traditions, religious affiliations and experiences” and who “were culturally distinct from the earlier settlers.”¹³⁰ These British settlers, unlike the French Huguenots or Germans, were not assimilated into the White, Dutch, community. The British began to refer to the Dutch as *Boers*, meaning “farmers.” The Dutch, in turn, began referring to themselves as *Afrikaners*.¹³¹ Thus a dynamic was added to the Cape which was not based on race, but on language and culture – an Anglo/Afrikaner conflict which was set to impact on the Southern African socio-economic and political landscape for decades to come.

While the British settlers were forbidden to have slaves, they acquired indigenous labour and engaged in intermittent warfare with the Xhosa. Thus, within the minds and milieu of the British Settlers, the principle of subjugation and dominance over the indigenous culture was slowly entrenched.

If the indigenous population hoped that the transition in political masters would bring relief from racial domination, their expectation was sadly misplaced. The Crown had changed, but White supremacy had not. While the British government tried to ameliorate the treatment meted out to the indigenous populations, the British governors sympathised with the slave-owning class and vacillated between enforcing and ignoring the policies as handed down by the British government, depending on political expediency.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 55.

¹³¹ Ross, 49, refers to the nomenclature of “Boers” being applied after the *trekboers* had become settled in the *Afrikaner* republics.

After the abolishment of the slave trade in 1807,¹³² sporadic attempts were made by the slaves of the Cape to protest against their continued mistreatment as well as that of the Khoikhoi. This manifested itself in the slave revolt of 1808 and the rebellion led by Galant of Worcester in 1825. Both of these uprisings were quickly put down by the militia.¹³³

Evangelical missionaries, notably the German Moravians and John Philip, the director of the London Missionary Society, agitated against the abuse and mistreatment of the slaves and the Khoikhoi. As a result of the lobbying, particularly with Philip's visit to London in 1826 where he petitioned the Anti-Slavery Society, the House of Commons passed a motion on 15 July 1828 instructing the colonial government to "secure to all the natives in South Africa, the same freedom and protection as are enjoyed by other free people of that Colony whether English or Dutch."¹³⁴

In anticipation of and wishing to pre-empt this action by the British government, the Colonial government on 17 July 1828 promulgated Ordinance 50. This far-reaching ordinance, which made "Hottentots and other free people of colour" equal before the law with Whites, was met with strong opposition by both Afrikaner and British settlers. However, the House of Common action meant that, even though attempts were made through the aborted Vagrancy Ordinance to reverse the gains

¹³² While slave *trade* was abolished in 1807, it was on 1 December 1834 that all slaves within the colony were set free. Ross, 37. Ross continues to point out that it was another 4 years later that slaves could actually be choose where to go as they had to serve an apprenticeship before being allowed to leave the employ of their former masters.

¹³³ Thompson, L., 57.

¹³⁴ Ross, 109. Cited in L. Thompson, 59.

of Ordinance 50, on “emancipation slaves stepped into the same legal status won by the Khoikhoi in 1828.”¹³⁵

The legal status conferred by Ordinance 50 did not address the poverty and subservient positions of either the Khoikhoi or the emancipated slaves. By the time of the passing of the Ordinance, Whites owned virtually all the productive land in the colony, giving the two groups no option but to continue to work for the White people. Thompson states that “[a]lthough they were not technically enslaved, lacking land and political power, most of them were effectively enserfed to the White colonists.”¹³⁶

In 1853 the British Government provided a constitution for the colony which, in theory, opened the parliamentary franchise to all males, subject to certain economic criteria.¹³⁷ However, in practice this had no material effect to the balance and exercise of power in the Cape, as can be observed from the fact that the Non-White electorate never amounted to more than 15%. This was also partly attributable the reality that they constituted the greater part of the poorer communities.¹³⁸ Due to the lack of representation in parliament, the Whites were able to proceed with impunity in devising regulations, such as the Masters and Servants Act of 1856, without internal opposition and without protest from Britain.

¹³⁵ Thompson, L., 59.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 61.

¹³⁷ La Guma, *Apartheid and the Coloured People of South Africa*.

<http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/misc/laguma12.html> [September, 2009].

¹³⁸ Thompson, L., 64.

The landscape for the future and continued development of Cape and Southern African politics was being set for the post-slavery colony – “the forms were the forms of freedom, but the facts were still the facts of exploitation.”¹³⁹

Under the Dutch in the 17th and 18th century, the legal system, notably in the introduction of slavery in 1658, had led to a political and social structure based on racial divisions and a hierarchy entrenching White domination. With the British occupation, the liberation of the slaves and the move from formal slavery to formal freedom,¹⁴⁰ the racial structure remained intact. It was this racial order that would survive and become a major determinant in the social order during the industrialization of and post-industrial period in South Africa. It would impact upon every aspect of the lives of the inhabitants of South Africa. It would determine the behaviour and policies of successive governments, civic structures, and, sadly, religious organizations.



Even John Philip, while a vigorous campaigner for Khoikhoi rights, saw his work, not to liberate the mind and thought patterns of the oppressed in order to encourage them to seek equality, but simply to improve their lot – to help them find gainful employment and to make them into better servants for the colony. He did not believe that they could ever be the economic or social equal of the Whites.¹⁴¹

The liberation of the slaves under the British in 1838 and Ordinance 50 of 1928 gave them, along with the Khoikhoi who had never been slaves, freedom and equality with the settler community. The term “Coloured” began to be applied to

¹³⁹ Ibid., 64.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 66.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 64.

both groups collectively.¹⁴² It is a term which was still on the statue books well into the 20th century. It is a term which, as with *Boer*, developed pejorative connotations. In its original usage, it referred to those inhabitants who were not of the majority Bantu-speaking Africans, the ruling White settlers or the indentured Indian labourers who were imported into Natal from around the 1860's.

However, in contrast to the San, the Bantu-speaking Africans or the Indians, the Coloured did not constitute a homogenous community. Cultural and biological differences amongst the Coloured society varied to a great degree. Those who lived in the peninsula had developed an urban lifestyle. They possessed or had acquired skills in various trades, particularly as skilled artisans, and were able to make a contribution to the commercial and economic progress of the Cape. The further away from the Cape, the stronger the original Khoikhoi ancestry could be discerned. However, soon their language and culture became linked to that of the colonists – primarily the Dutch and secondarily the British. In two hundred years of contact with the invaders, the indigenous culture of the Khoikhoi had been significantly diluted. L. Thompson states that

the only descendants of the aboriginal Khoisan are the so-called Cape Coloured people – an amalgam of people of diverse origins who possess few of the cultural traits of the pre-colonial ancestors.¹⁴³

While L. Thompson argues for the “Cape coloured people” being the “only descendants of the aboriginal Khoisan,” Andrew B. Smith points out that the people of Namaqualand, the Griqua National Council and the inhabitants of the

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 69.

Richtersveld, in recent years, have all claimed and sought to establish their Khoikhoi heritage, culture and ancestry.¹⁴⁴

The Dutch language, mixed with the language of the slaves, began to change to where a derivative – Afrikaans – began to be spoken; firstly among the Coloured community of the Western Cape¹⁴⁵ and later adopted by the *Boers* as the language of the White *Afrikaner*.

Biologically, there had been frequent and considerable miscegenation and cohabitation across the colour line and many of those with mixed heritage were accepted into the *Afrikaner* community. As noted earlier, the darker communities had become whiter and whiter communities had become darker. If the Coloured community was to be separated from the White community based on pure European heritage versus a mixed heritage, then a large portion of *Afrikaners* needed to be included in the Coloured community.¹⁴⁶

Recognizing this trend and threat of greater dilution of *Afrikaner* whiteness, and given the British dependence upon receiving cooperation from the descendants of the Dutch, the White community, fuelled by *Afrikaner* and British race consciousness, moved quickly to isolate the Coloured community – declared equal in the sight of the law by Ordinance 50 in 1828 and further strengthened by the 1853 non-racial constitution provided by the British Government.

¹⁴⁴ Smith, A. B. *Where Have All The Hottentots Gone? The Archaeology And History Of The Khoekhoen*, 2002. <http://www.scienceinafrica.co.za/2002/august/khoi.htm> [September, 2009].

¹⁴⁵ The first Afrikaans was written in Arabic script by the Muslims the Cape. See Giliomee and Mbenga, 71.

¹⁴⁶ Including Simon van der Stel, as noted in the footnote on page 68.

In 1857 the synod of the Dutch Reformed Church moved to authorise the separation of White and Coloured members – leading to distinct and subordinate Black and Coloured mission churches.¹⁴⁷ By 1861, Coloured children were banned from public schools; schooling for the Coloured community was left to mission institutions. Thus, despite the constitutional liberalism of British statutes, the “white rulers of the Cape Colony were treating the coloured people as a distinct and inferior community, dependent on white employers.”¹⁴⁸

A different grouping to the emerging Coloureds was the Black mixed-farming Bantu-speaking Africans. Located largely in the eastern half of South Africa, their communities were impacted minimally by colonialism prior to 1830. As discussed earlier, the Black population of Southern Africa was not formally enslaved by the Dutch. They were able to continue their lives in their mixed-farming communities under the leadership of their chiefs. Contact was made with hunters, traders and missionaries. But, by and large, no major impact was initially felt by the Africans. In contrast to the Khoisan, the Africans were populous, their economy complex, their social networks resilient and their political systems sophisticated.¹⁴⁹

It was not until the last quarter of the 18th century, when *Afrikaner trekboers* reached the westernmost boundaries of the Xhosa settlements that the commencement of conflict became part of the relationship between the Africans and the colonists. With the placement of the 1820 settlers as a buffer on the eastern border of the colony, and their resistance to the Xhosa’s wish to occupy the land

¹⁴⁷ Thompson, L., 65.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 71

that had been taken from them by force of arms, the recipe for continued conflict was in place.

If the settlers believed that the African societies would disintegrate and disappear as had the Khoikhoi and San, they were wrong.

How did the Afrikaners react to British rule? While the British did not materially set out to change the status quo, the issue of Ordinance 50, the defeat of the Vagrancy Ordinance, the emancipation of the slaves and the continued instability on the eastern boundaries with insufficient support of the colonial government led to great dissatisfaction amongst the Dutch settlers. This was particularly the case of the *Boers* in the Eastern Cape. Under the British, the autonomy enjoyed by the *Boers* was ending. By 1813, the practice of obtaining 6 000 acres for a nominal fee was curtailed and replaced with the quitrent system that regularized the purchase of property – at a higher price.¹⁵⁰

A progressive process of Anglicisation had also begun to take place:

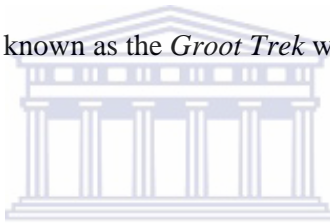
1. Government control of the outlying areas – sketchy or absent under Dutch rule – was increased, consequently emphasizing British culture and institutions.¹⁵¹
2. The arrival of the 1820 settlers increased pressure on the Colonial government to give preferential treatment to English

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 67.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

3. Law enforcement was brought under the control of the government and not left in the hands of *landdrosts* and *heemraden*¹⁵² who had previously been appointed by the Dutch farmers
4. British supervision began to be exercised over the Dutch Reformed Church
5. By the 1830's English was the sole language authorised for use in government offices, law courts and public schools.¹⁵³

Within a relatively short period after the 2nd British Occupation, the frontier *Afrikaner* farmers gave vent to their dissatisfaction with British rule by deciding to leave the Cape Colony and head for the northern and north eastern interior. The process of migration became known as the *Groot Trek* with the farmers called *Voortrekkers*.



Piet Retief of the Grahamstown district, who later became the governing leader of the *Voortrekkers*, set out the reasons for their leaving the Cape in what has become known as *Retief's Manifesto*.¹⁵⁴ He left the *Manifesto* in Grahamstown in 1837 for the attention of Lt-Governor Stockenström with whom he had been conducting correspondence re the plight of the *Afrikaners*.

The reasons given are listed in the first five points of the *Manifesto* and are as follows:

1. We despair of saving the colony those evils, which threaten it by the turbulent and dishonest conduct of vagrants, who are allowed to infest the country in every part; nor do we see any prospect of

¹⁵² Ibid., 46

¹⁵³ Ibid., 67.

¹⁵⁴ J. C. Chase, 83, 84

peace or happiness for our children in a country thus distracted by internal commotions.

2. We complain of the severe losses, which we have been forced to sustain by the emancipation of our slaves, and the vexatious laws, which have been enacted respecting them.
3. We complain of the continual system of plunder which we have ever endured from the Kaffirs and other coloured classes, and particularly by the last invasion of the colony, which has desolated the frontier districts, and ruined most of the inhabitants.
4. We complain of the unjustifiable odium which has been cast upon us by interested and dishonest persons, under the cloak of religion, whose testimony is believed in England to the exclusion of all evidence in our favour; and we can foresee as the result of this prejudice, nothing but the total ruin of the country.
5. We are resolved, wherever we go, that we will uphold the just principles of liberty; but whilst we will take care that no one shall be held in a state of slavery, it is our determination to maintain such regulations as may suppress crime and preserve proper relations between master and servant.

In contrast to Piet Retief's *Manifesto*, the reasons for the Great Trek given on an exhibition board in the Voortrekker Monument are worth noting:

The Great Trek was a rebellion against the policy of the colonial power and a search for new agricultural land outside the colonial borders. As a result of the Trek the largest part of north-eastern South Africa was subsequently occupied by European colonists. This divided South Africa into two British colonies and two later Boer republics that were unionized into a unitary state in 1910.

The Great Trek is seen as an Afrikaner-peoples movement. In reality only one tenth of the Cape Afrikaners and many black and coloured employees participated in this migration. The "great" of the Great

Trek is therefore not an indication of the large numbers of people who migrated, but of the importance of this occurrence.¹⁵⁵

While the above statement focuses on the dissatisfaction with colonial policies and the need to find new farming land, it also draws the reader's attention to the migration as not being an Afrikaner-peoples movement, but that which included "many black and coloured employees." The *Manifesto*, however, has not been softened by revisionism: the five reasons given are linked to:

1. the dissatisfaction of the *Afrikaner* with British policies in relation to the impact of the emancipation of the slaves
2. the conduct of the Kaffirs and Coloureds
3. the role of the missionaries – "interested and dishonest" persons – in petitioning the Crown to intervene in the mistreatment of the coloureds and Blacks. "[N]othing but total ruin" is seen as the result of the interfering by the "prejudiced" missionaries operating "under the cloak of religion."
4. the desire to maintain "proper relations between master and servant."

It would require a huge leap of imagination to conclude, as does the Voortrekker Monument statement, that "blacks and coloureds participated in the migration." "Participation" implies 'sharing,' 'involvement,' 'identifying with.' Given the reasons in the *Manifesto* it would be more accurate to state that the Blacks and Coloureds were taken along in their customary role – as servants in the 'master and servant' relationship.

¹⁵⁵ Transcribed from photograph taken by the researcher of exhibition board in the Voortrekker Monument Museum, Pretoria, Tshwane, July 2009.

The huge friezes (the largest in the world) in the Voortrekker Monument, the artefacts and exhibitions in the museum, the paintings and embroidery depictions all portray a migration of White *Afrikaners*. Nowhere is there evidence of the Blacks and Coloured as being part of the migration in opposition to British colonial policies and the search for new agricultural land.

The response of the *Afrikaners* to British rule can be thus summed up as a rejection of any attempt to afford all of the peoples of South Africa equality before the law and an equal opportunity to compete for “scarce resources to satisfy unlimited human wants” in an open market system.¹⁵⁶

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



From Refreshment Station to Emerging Mineral Giant

The VOC sought initially to provide a trading station in which they would be able to barter with the indigenous population in order to provide for the needs of the travellers around the Cape of Good Hope.¹⁵⁷ There was no intention of developing a colony or to engage in any commercial activity outside of the victualling needs.

As they moved into the colonial mode¹⁵⁸ after the appointment of the fifth governor at the Cape, Pieter Hackius in 1670,¹⁵⁹ farming and related industries developed. Free burgers, *trekboers* and other sectors of the population began to move away from the settlement at the foot of Table Mountain and to establish themselves in

¹⁵⁶ Lipsey and Courant, *Economics*, 4

¹⁵⁷ Thompson, L., 38.

¹⁵⁸ Welsh, 43

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

economic relationships that were not dependent on providing for the needs of passing ships. The colony had matured to where it became a self-propagating and self-sufficient community. This process was accelerated under British rule, especially after the 2nd Occupation in 1806.

This expansion did not come without a price. As the colony spread, it progressively encroached upon the grazing lands of the herders and the traditional territories of the hunter/gatherers. This resulted in the economic base of the indigenous population being eroded. This is one of the tragedies of history that “during the long period of European colonialism and imperialism”¹⁶⁰ the colonial masters, as a rule, were the victors in the conflicts that ensued, with the indigenous peoples being the losers. Economically, the Europeans were able to enrich themselves, to a great degree, at the expense of the original inhabitants.¹⁶¹

Terblanche argues that this was accomplished through the creation of “political and economic power structures” that ensured that Europeans remained in a position of dominance over the indigenous peoples. Secondly, the possessions of the indigenous people were limited, especially with regard to cattle, land and surface water. The third factor was the creation of unfree and exploitable labour amongst the slave classes and the indigenous peoples.¹⁶²

Upon the arrival of the Dutch, the indigenous people were self-governing and economically independent. They had land, cattle, water and produce at their disposal and under their control. They worked for themselves or for their tribe or

¹⁶⁰ Terreblanche, 6.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

clan. Despite the technological differences between the Europeans and the Africans south of the Limpopo River, they were able to meet as equals, with the Africans basking in the dignity of freedom and sustainability.

The process of colonialism and imperialism destroyed that. While it can be argued that “all is fair in love and war” and that the colonization of a country is in essence an invasion, an act of war or conquest “for king and country,” what resulted was a system that for 350 years maintained the natural inhabitants of a country in a state of subservience and economic deprivation and dependency.

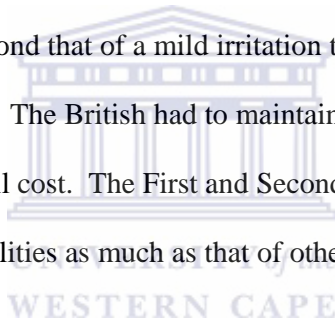
Despite the progressive encroachment into the indigenous economic arena and the resultant erosion of independence, Britain did not consider South Africa as a potential contributor to the Empire in an economic sense. It was more a case of managing an outpost whose value was providing a base for shipping that needed to pass by the tip of Africa to and from Europe and the East.

However, this was set to change in the most dramatic of fashions. By the middle of the 19th century most of the country had been parcelled into farms owned by Europeans.¹⁶³ While these landowners were beginning to carve out successful farming careers and were beginning to provide provisions for the export markets to Europe and the east, it was the discovery of diamonds (1867) in the northern cape and gold (1886) in the Transvaal that was set to radically transform the economic landscape, not only of South Africa, but the entire Southern Africa region.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 10.

The mining operations that sprung up with thousands of fortune-seekers flooding into South Africa from Europe and the Americas irrevocably altered the landscape of the areas surrounding Kimberley and Johannesburg. Before long, entrepreneurs like Barney Barnato and Cecil John Rhodes banded together with various investors and transformed the mining operations that had begun with the pick and shovel into highly industrialised operations. It was these mining operations that transformed South Africa from an agricultural backwater into a potential industrial giant.

The focus and interest in South Africa by the British changed radically. The concern with regard to the emerging Afrikaner Republics in the northern section of South Africa progressed beyond that of a mild irritation to the British Empire to that of an economic priority. The British had to maintain possession of the diamond and gold fields at all cost. The First and Second South African Wars were thus fuelled by economic realities as much as that of other political considerations.



With an uneasy peaceful relationship between the British and the Afrikaner republics established by the Bloemfontein and Sand River Conventions and – later – the Peace of Vereeniging, the British were able to create a political and economic climate that would allow South Africa to emerge as an industrial giant.

Sadly, though, the wealth of the country was in the hands of the Europeans, with the indigenous people and indentured labourers from abroad providing the cheap labour to procure this prosperity. The master/servant relationship between White, Coloured and Black had become firmly entrenched and enmeshed into the social

and economic fabric of the country.¹⁶⁴ Compounds for Black labourers were set up in Kimberley, ostensibly to curb illicit diamond dealing.¹⁶⁵

The “tripartite structure” introduced by Van Riebeeck¹⁶⁶ had become firmly grounded, socially and economically, and would continue to effect the development of the country.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

This chapter thus far has sought to examine the factors that created the political, religious, social and economic landscape of the last quarter of the 19th century in South Africa. It was against this backdrop that the Seventh-day Adventist Church was introduced into this country. It was these factors that would influence the direction the Church took as it sought to secure a foothold in Africa. The next section proceeds to examine the Church’s approach to missions and its subsequent establishment in South Africa.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church and Missions

William Miller, the farmer-turned-preacher who played a prominent role in the development of the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church had developed a

¹⁶⁴ Terreblanche discusses eight unfree labour patterns manifested in South Africa since 1652, demonstrating how successive colonial and imperial governments, including the government of South Africa post-Union and post-Republic, systematically developed laws and systems to plunge the majority of Africans into economic and political bondage. See pp. 11-14. He comments on page 14: “Although [the black population] are no longer systemically exploited, the poorer 50 per cent of the population are still systematically excluded from most of the privileges of the new system of democratic capitalism.”

¹⁶⁵ Worden, 43. While the initial intention was for Black and White workers to be confined to the Compounds, strikes by White labourers caused a change in this plan and only Blacks were compelled to occupy the compounds.

¹⁶⁶ Ross, 23.

limited understanding of mission. This was fed by a syllogistic interpretation of Matthew 24:14 – “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.”¹⁶⁷

Because the end was coming, according to his understanding and demonstrated through his interpretation of bible prophecy, the gospel of the kingdom must then have been preached in all the world. He saw the “gospel” in a broad sense – the message of Christianity in general. Furthermore, he saw the fulfilment of Matthew 24:14 centred upon the word “witness.”¹⁶⁸ Thus it was not necessary for the Millerites to engage in missionary activity to propagate the peculiar Advent message to every individual.¹⁶⁹ It was sufficient that there was a Christian presence, as a “witness”, on each of the continents and in most of the countries of the world. The establishment of a world-wide Advent Movement was not seen as a gospel imperative.¹⁷⁰ They did, however, feel compelled to increase their publications in an attempt to distribute Adventist literature to as many people of the planet as possible.¹⁷¹

The SDA Church in America did not see itself in its formative years as having a biblical mandate to evangelize the whole world. It concentrated its efforts at formulating its doctrines and systematizing its beliefs. In fact, during the first decade after the “Great Disappointment” its leaders vehemently resisted any form

¹⁶⁷ Damsteegt, 50.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 51.

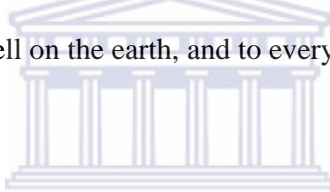
¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 56.

¹⁷⁰ An interesting vignette is found in a response from Uriah Smith, editor of the *Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald* in 1859. Replying to a reader’s question with regard to the preaching of the third angel’s message of Rev 14 outside of America, he indicated that it “might not be necessary since the United States consisted of people from all nations.” Cited by Knight in *Lest We Forget*, 197.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 53.

of church governance, believing that the organized churches from which they had come was “Babylon” and that any attempt at formal organization would be a return to Babylon.¹⁷² It was only in the late 1850’s that they began to see the wisdom of a structured organization.¹⁷³

Shortly after settling on a denominational name in 1860,¹⁷⁴ Seventh-day Adventists began to talk about a worldwide movement. This was done on the basis of the belief that Christ had urged His followers to "go . . . into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15. The Seventh-day Adventist Church saw its special mandate as that of preaching the message of the Three Angels of Revelation 14.¹⁷⁵ This “message” spoke of "the everlasting gospel" which was to be proclaimed to "them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people"



By default, and not through missionary endeavour on the part of the American Church, the Church was drawn into mission expansion. In 1861 it was discovered that at least five individuals in Ireland were practicing Seventh-day Adventists.¹⁷⁶

By 1864 Michael Belina Czechowski, a former Polish Catholic priest, who had been converted to Adventism in Ohio in 1857,¹⁷⁷ approached the organization “with the request that he be sent to Europe” to spread the Seventh-day Adventist message.¹⁷⁸ His request was rejected.¹⁷⁹ Reasons for the denial were

¹⁷² Land, 36.

¹⁷³ SDA Church Manual, xix.

¹⁷⁴ Damsteegt, 255.

¹⁷⁵ **“Our Mission:** The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to proclaim to all peoples the everlasting gospel in the context of the Three Angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12, leading them to accept Jesus as their personal Savior and to unite with His church, and nurturing them in preparation for His soon return.” www.adventist.org [July, 2009].

¹⁷⁶ http://www.adventist.org/world_church/facts_and_figures/history/index.html.en [July, 2009].

¹⁷⁷ Spalding, 197.

¹⁷⁸ Pantalone, 1996: 41.

¹⁷⁹ Damsteegt, 286.

understandable at that stage in the development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. No official structure was in place. The Church was struggling to establish its identity within the American context and would have found it difficult to “wrestle with distant enterprises.”¹⁸⁰ In addition, Knight also suggests that Czechowski was considered by the some to have personality instabilities, with the result that the SDA Church was not keen to send him.¹⁸¹

The denomination was officially organized on May 21, 1863, when the movement included some 125 churches and 3,500 members. Two years earlier, the Michigan Conference had been organized. With the General Conference being formed in 1863, it signalled the arrival of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as an organized body.

A year after the formation of the organization, Czechowski left for Europe without Church sanction or support.¹⁸² He worked in Northern Italy, Rumania and Switzerland.¹⁸³ As a result of his work in Switzerland, the Advent believers there requested that someone be sent from America to “teach them the complete Adventist message.”¹⁸⁴ The response from the organization was to encourage the Swiss believers to send one of their members who could come and be trained and return to Switzerland. This was done. James Erzenberger went to the United States in 1869, returning in the following year as the first officially ordained minister sent by the Church to Europe¹⁸⁵ to minister in his home country.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁰ Pantalone, 1996, 41.

¹⁸¹ Knight, *Lest We Forget*, 198.

¹⁸² Leonard, 191. In fact, he was sponsored by the first-day Adventists. See Knight, *Lest We Forget*, 198.

¹⁸³ Land, 87.

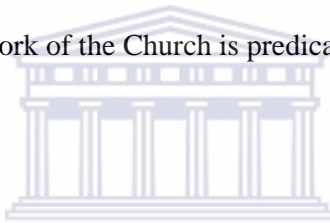
¹⁸⁴ Pantalone, 42.

¹⁸⁵ Knight, *Lest We Forget*, 202.

Four years later the first American missionary, J.N. Andrews, was sent to Switzerland, following up on the work of Czechowski and Erzenberger. His launching out into Europe was followed in close succession by a number of other forays into distant lands as the Church pursued with vigour what it believed to be its mandate – to convey the “Message of the Three Angel’s” to the world.

What needs to be noted is that the mission expansion of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is seen as being marked by the sending of J.N. Andrews to Europe.

Pantalone describes him as “the first official missionary of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to set foot in Europe.”¹⁸⁷ Despite the effort of Czechowski and Erzenberger, the “official” work of the Church is predicated on the arrival of an American missionary.



The E.G. White Estate, an official department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists states: “John Nevins Andrews is most notably know [sic] in the Seventh-day Adventist Church as our *first* missionary overseas”¹⁸⁸ (emphasis supplied). The fact that he was being sent into a field where the Church had become established to the degree that “leaders” were in place is borne out by E.G. White, one of the founders of the Church, who wrote to Church leaders in Europe about J.N. Andrews: “We sent you the ablest man in our ranks”¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ Spalding, 199.

¹⁸⁷ Pantalone 42.

¹⁸⁸ <http://www.whiteestate.org/pathways/jandrews.asp> [July, 2009].

¹⁸⁹ White, Manuscript Releases, vol. 5, p. 436.

Looking at the pattern and philosophy of Adventist missionary endeavour during the latter part of the 19th century, it appears as though the continent of Africa did not feature very high on the list of un-entered territories to be evangelized.

Adventism in South Africa

The previous section examined the shift in the thinking of the SDA Church with regard to missionary expansion. This coincided with the discovery of diamonds in South Africa. It was this discovery that brought the first known Sabbath keeper in South Africa to the Kimberley area.

He was an American miner, William Hunt, who had attended meetings conducted by J. N. Loughborough in northern California during the early 1870's.¹⁹⁰ By June 1878 he had made his way to South Africa in order to try his hand at diamond prospecting in Kimberley.¹⁹¹ Hunt shared his faith with some South Africans who accepted the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Amongst these was J.H.C. Wilson, "a former local preacher of the Wesleyan Methodist Church at Kimberley."¹⁹² Wilson wrote a letter to the official newspaper of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in America, the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, informing them of the group of believers who had accepted the Adventist faith through Hunt's efforts.¹⁹³ However, no record of any attempt to reply or to formalize the group of

¹⁹⁰ M. E. Olsen, 483.

¹⁹¹ Swanepoel, 1

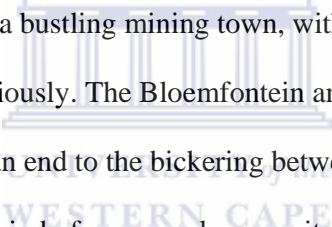
¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ J. H. C. Wilson, *A Letter from Africa*, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 6, 1878, p. 183.

Sabbath-keepers into a church or to offer them any assistance in becoming part of the world church structure can be found.

By the time Wilson had written to the *Review* the Christian Church had already been established in South Africa for two hundred and twenty-six years.¹⁹⁴

Missionary activity had blossomed to where the country could be described as Christian. Virtually all of the mainline Christian denominations were represented in the country. Mission stations had been established; mission schools were providing schooling to the indigenous communities of the country, especially in the rural areas.



Kimberley was growing into a bustling mining town, with diamonds having been discovered twelve years previously. The Bloemfontein and Sand River Conventions¹⁹⁵ had brought an end to the bickering between the British and the Afrikaner Republics and a period of peace and prosperity had commenced.

The “field” appeared to be ripe for harvest. Why the SDA Church did not respond to the report of J. H. C. Wilson is not known. In the absence of any evidence, one is only left to speculate as to what the reasons might have been.

Wessels and Van Druten

It was not until 1885 that “a sequence of events took place which made Seventh-day Adventism take root in South Africa.”¹⁹⁶ Hunt met up with George van

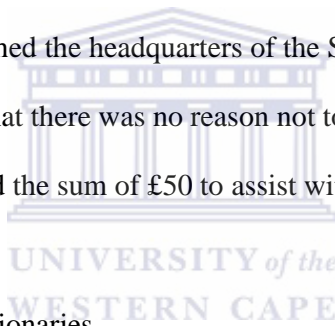
¹⁹⁴ Ross, 26.

¹⁹⁵ 1852 and 1854 respectively. See Ross, 49.

¹⁹⁶ Swanepoel, 2

Druten¹⁹⁷ and Pieter Wessels, who originally had been members of the Boshoff Dutch Reformed Church.¹⁹⁸ These two South African farmers had, independently of each other, come to the conclusion that the biblical seventh-day Sabbath of Exodus 20:8-11 was Saturday and not Sunday as taught by their church and the majority of the rest of Christendom.¹⁹⁹

They were delighted to meet Hunt and discover that they were not the only persons in the world, as they had thought, who held that view.²⁰⁰ They immediately despatched a letter to the *Review & Herald*, the Church paper that Hunt had shared with them. Their letter, in which they requested that a Dutch-speaking missionary be sent to South Africa, reached the headquarters of the SDA Church in Battle Creek, USA.²⁰¹ To ensure that there was no reason not to respond positively to the request, Van Druten included the sum of £50 to assist with the expenses.²⁰²



The Arrival of the First Missionaries

Much to the disappointment of Wessels the group despatched from the United States, in response to their request, did not include any Dutch-speaking missionaries.²⁰³ J. F. Stuurman, a Dutch-speaking seller of Christian literature, who was assigned to make the trip, decided not to come.²⁰⁴ On July 28, 1887, Pastor's

¹⁹⁷ Olsen, 483.

¹⁹⁸ Swanepoel, 6

¹⁹⁹ Pantalone, 44.

²⁰⁰ Ibid. The Czechowski converts in Europe also thought they were the only believers – but this was by design, as Czechowski chose not to inform the new members that there was a Church in America. Apparently his non-approval by the Church as a missionary led him to proclaim the message of the Church but to distance himself from the organization. It was only when Albert Vuilleumier, one of the Swiss believers, found a copy of the *Review and Herald* in Czechowski's room, that the converts became aware of the Church in America. See Knight, *Lest We Forget*, 202.

²⁰¹ Swanepoel, 2

²⁰² Olsen, 485.

²⁰³ P. J. D. Wessels, "Early Experiences of Mr. P. J. D. Wessels."

²⁰⁴ Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook, 1887, 34.

C. L. Boyd and D. A. Robinson, both English-speaking Americans, and their spouses arrived in Cape Town.²⁰⁵ They were accompanied by G. Burleigh and R. S. Anthony, both door-to-door purveyors of Adventist literature, and magazines, and Miss Corrie Mace, a Bible Instructor.²⁰⁶ They were to be the first in a long line of American missionaries who served, and who continue to serve, on this continent.

Upon their arrival they found that there was a group of 40 adherents waiting to meet them.²⁰⁷ They were part of the core of what was to become the SDA Church in South Africa.²⁰⁸ The request for a Dutch-speaking minister was never honoured, despite the gift of £50!

The First Congregation and Organization

Boyd proceeded to Kimberley while Robinson remained in Cape Town. The first congregation, consisting of 26 members²⁰⁹, was formally organized by September, 27, 1887. By April, 1889, the first formal organization of SDA's in South Africa was created through the formation of the South African Branch of the International Tract and Missionary Society, a Sabbath School Association and the appointment of a General Canvassing Agent.²¹⁰ Three years later the South African Conference of Seventh-day Adventists was formed (December 8, 1892), with the work in the

²⁰⁵ Swanepoel, 10; Pantalone, 48. SDA Encyclopaedia, 1976, 1364; Spalding, 6.

²⁰⁶ Swanepoel, 10.

²⁰⁷ Sepulveda, 254, 255.

²⁰⁸ Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook, 1890, 70.

²⁰⁹ A distinction needs to be made between “adherents” and “members”. “Members” refer to those who have received formal instruction from the Church in “baptismal classes” as adults (or children old enough to be instructed and to understand) and have been accepted into Church membership through immersion. “Adherents” would include those who have been baptised as well as those who have indicated an interest and accepted the teachings of the Church but have not been baptised as yet.

²¹⁰ Swanepoel, 17

Cape Colony being organized.²¹¹ Natal, Orange Free State and Transvaal provinces operated as mission fields connected with the Cape Colony.²¹² In 1903 these territories were formed into a Conference, having been set up as an independent mission field in 1902.²¹³ After the formation of this mission field, the South African Union Conference was organized in 1903 with F. W. Reaser elected as the first president.²¹⁴ The South African Division was organized in 1919 with W. H. Branson serving as the first president.²¹⁵

Development of a mission model in South Africa

After the establishment of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa, the Church took its lead from the missionaries and maintained a doctrinal and organizational unity in step with the World Church. However, when it came to functioning within a “mission” context, the Seventh-day Adventist Church had to write the rules in terms of organizational practice as they encountered circumstances foreign to the thinking and experience of the expatriate leadership. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that the Seventh-day Adventist Church did not develop a *Church Manual* until 1932.²¹⁶ Some “instructions to church officers” was printed in tract form in 1882.²¹⁷ Thus in 1887 the first missionaries to South Africa found themselves having to, as it were, “fly by the seat of their pants.”

²¹¹ Ibid. See also Robinson, n.d., 14. Olsen refers to this date as the formation of the Cape Conference. 485, 486.

²¹² Olsen, 486.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 487. The SAUC EXCOM minutes record his first attendance at a meeting of EXCOM on August 19, 1920, where is welcomed by Elder White.

²¹⁶ Ibid., xx

²¹⁷ *Review and Herald*, Dec. 26, 1882.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church began its operations against a background of a country with a long history of spirituality, with the early Dutch inhabitants of the Cape encountering an indigenous population with a “vital and rich spiritual experience.”²¹⁸ This was complemented by the introduction of the Christian faith which, by the time of the arrival of the first Adventist missionaries, had been present in South Africa for over two hundred years. According to Etherington, in Natal alone, nine missionary societies, linked to the Methodist, Lutheran, Congregational and Catholic churches had already been established by the nineteenth century²¹⁹.

The SDA Church had to be systematized within a political context that was in a state of flux, with colonial, national, racial, cultural and language considerations impacting upon the direction that policies and politics were taking. The socio-economic development of the country was not transpiring in a vacuum. It was fed by an ideology shaped by centuries of systematic entrenchment of the rights and privileges of the invaders who by now had become 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th generation settlers. This entrenchment had been done at the expense of the indigenous inhabitants of South Africa.

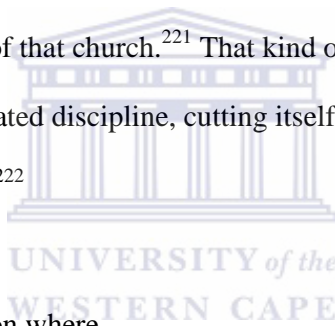
It was within this dynamic milieu that the Seventh-day Adventist Church developed in this country. There was a symbiotic relationship between all these factors. And it was these factors that inexorably drove the fledgling leadership towards the development of a South African Church with unique characteristics that influenced

²¹⁸ Welsh, 17.

²¹⁹ Etherington, 32.

and still influences the functioning of the organization more than one hundred years later.

It is important to pause at this juncture to reflect on this symbiotic relationship. When recounting the history of any particular denomination, it is easy to adopt a linear approach in which the events along a chronological time-line are documented and analysed. This analysis is often done within the parameters of understanding the church and its doctrinal development. Phillip Denis states that “church historians tend to place more emphasis on the theological and ecclesiastical identity of their denominations.”²²⁰ What this does is to ignore the socio-political-economic context of the development of that church.²²¹ That kind of church history operates and can be viewed as an isolated discipline, cutting itself off from the social sciences and secular history.²²²



This has resulted in a situation where,

[i]n the academic world, church history appears as an isolated entity, inward-looking and insufficiently related to other disciplines which deal with related subjects or with the same subjects but with different methodologies.²²³

This is supported by H. T. Hanekom who identified four shortcomings of South African church histories: they were polemical, culturally restricted, ethnically bound, and narrowly based geographically²²⁴.

²²⁰ Denis, 87.

²²¹ Kalu in Appiah-Kubi and Torres, 14.

²²² Southey, quoted in Denis, 84.

²²³ Denis, 84.

²²⁴ Hanekom, quoted in Dennis, 84.

When surveying the attempt at documenting the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa, it appears as though the “shortcomings” identified by Hanekom are present.

Swanepoel, in his *The Origin and Early History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa 1886-1920*²²⁵, states:

In the following pages the reader will find the history of a church with a well-focused objective: that of taking its particular religious message to all people, irrespective of their colour, their religious persuasion, or on what side they were in war-time, and to accomplish this by a wide variety of methods and approaches.²²⁶

A study of Swanepoel’s work reveals no attempt at placing the emergence of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Southern Africa within the context of the developments of the country prior to the arrival of the Church or even at the time of the arrival. While he indicates what the well-focused objectives are, what he goes on to recount and record does not support those objectives.

As discussed in the next chapter, it appears as though Swanepoel set out to document a history of the White SDA Church in South Africa. Part of his objective was to focus on the attempts of the Church at “achieving a balance in its European membership between Dutch and English-speaking members.”²²⁷ With reference to the operation of the Church in South Africa, he states that “the Seventh-day Adventist Church remained strictly aloof from political involvement, and operated

²²⁵ L. F. Swanepoel: *The Origin and Early History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa. 1886-1920* unpublished MA thesis, UNISA, 1972

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, xi

²²⁷ Swanepoel, 135.

on such a level that it seldom had any direct contact with the country's government."²²⁸ That remaining "strictly aloof from political involvement" appears to translate into the recounting of the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as though it developed in a vacuum.

R. C. L. Thompson states that the establishment of the Church and its development up till 1920 and beyond are "characterized by a strong sense of progress in all of its activities."²²⁹ However, in documenting the "progress" of the Church "in all of its activities" no attempt is made to relate those activities to the realities of the country in which the Church was developing.

When the Church commenced to proceed down the road of institutionalised separation, R. C. L. Thompson does not set out to indicate the political and social factors that were brought to bear on the thinking of the leadership of the Church. It once again appears, as with Swanepoel, that the Church remained apolitical to the point that it operated in a total vacuum.

R. C. L. Thompson proceeds to describe the move by the SDA Church to separate its members into racially composed "self-governing" congregations and organizational units in the following comment:

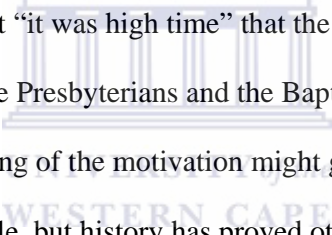
Several Christian missions, such as the Presbyterians and Baptists, had developed independent self-governing churches in Southern Africa during the twenties. It was high time the Seventh-day Adventist Church should follow the example.²³⁰

²²⁸ Ibid., viii

²²⁹ Thompson, R. C. L., xii.

²³⁰ Ibid., 320.

No discussion ensues as to determine what factors lead to the setting up of the separate, self-governing churches. What impact had the setting up of the Boer republics had? Was the issue of the franchise during the discussions leading up to 1910 and the formation of the Union a factor?²³¹ Did the Mines and Workers Act entrench the thinking that Blacks and Coloureds belonged to the barbarous and underdeveloped peoples? Did the uprising of 1921 by the Israelites and the 1922 White miners' strike drive the Church towards re-examining its relationship with persons of colour? Had the Church considered any missiological and church growth principles that necessitated a possible separation into different entities? Was there a gospel principle that needed to be applied?



On the contrary, he states that “it was high time” that the SDA Church follow suite – to follow the example of the Presbyterians and the Baptists in setting up racially divided churches. The wording of the motivation might give the impression of the following of a worthy example, but history has proved otherwise.

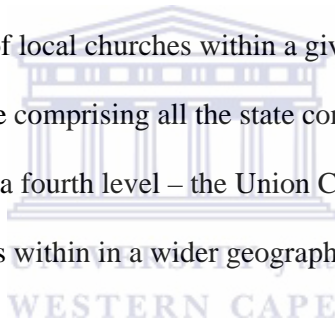
The historiographical and missiological approach to the development of the SDA Church in South Africa seems to ignore the symbiotic nature and relationship of the establishment and growth of the Church. Yet the impact of the socio-political and economic realities of the country cannot be ignored when examining the progress of the Church. A mistake that can be made is to develop a dualistic mindset, considering the Church and its members as those who “are looking for a city Whose Builder and Maker is God” to the exclusion of accepting the realities of this present and temporal world.

²³¹ Swanepoel, 135, refers to the formation of Union in 1910 as “a new political unity” which would “provide new and improved conditions within which the church could work towards greater unity.”

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH

The organizational pattern adopted by the Church in South Africa followed that of the USA Church, based on the philosophy and belief that the Church was part of the world-wide body and not an independent South African Church.

The structure that was introduced to the South African Church was based on what had been adopted in 1863²³² with the official establishment of the SDA Church in the USA. It was to set the pattern for the later years throughout the World-Church. The structure was simple. It consisted of three levels: 1. the local church; 2. the state conference comprised of local churches within a given geographical territory, and (3) a General Conference comprising all the state conferences.²³³ This was expanded in 1901 to include a fourth level – the Union Conference which was a grouping of state conferences within a wider geographical area.²³⁴



The South African branch of the Seventh-day Adventist Church made a unique contribution to the world Church by introducing an additional level of church governance – that of centralizing the different boards such as the Missionary Board, the Publishing Board, etc., directly under the South African Conference in 1892. This arrangement had been alluded to in 1890 by the Church in America²³⁵, but had not been implemented at that time. Now, as a result of the practicality of administering the work within the mission field, the Church proceeded with the

²³²B. D. Oliver, *Seventh-day Adventist Organizational Structure*, 48.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 49.

²³⁴ Schwarz and Greenleaf, 256 – 257.

²³⁵ Oliver, 74 – 81.

“South African experiment”²³⁶ which, today, forms part of the world Church structure. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is thus a worldwide organization consisting of a single Church spread out across the globe employing a Representative from of government.²³⁷ This study speaks of the “Church in America” or the “Church in South Africa” without implying independent churches, but denoting the operations of the Church in the respective countries. Similarly, while different organizational structures were established to administer the work amongst the Coloured peoples of South Africa, a separate “Coloured Church” never existed.

Church governance takes place through elected leaders and representatives. From the local level to the world level, members are delegated to represent the constituency. The elected leaders and committees are charged with the administering of the work of the Church. At each level the leadership is responsible to its immediate constituency and reports via business meetings (local church) and constituency meetings (Conference, Union, Division and General Conference). Diagrammatically the structure can be illustrated as follows:

²³⁶ Ibid., 73.

²³⁷ *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, 16th ed., Hagerstown, Maryland, Review & Herald Publishing Association, 2000, 26

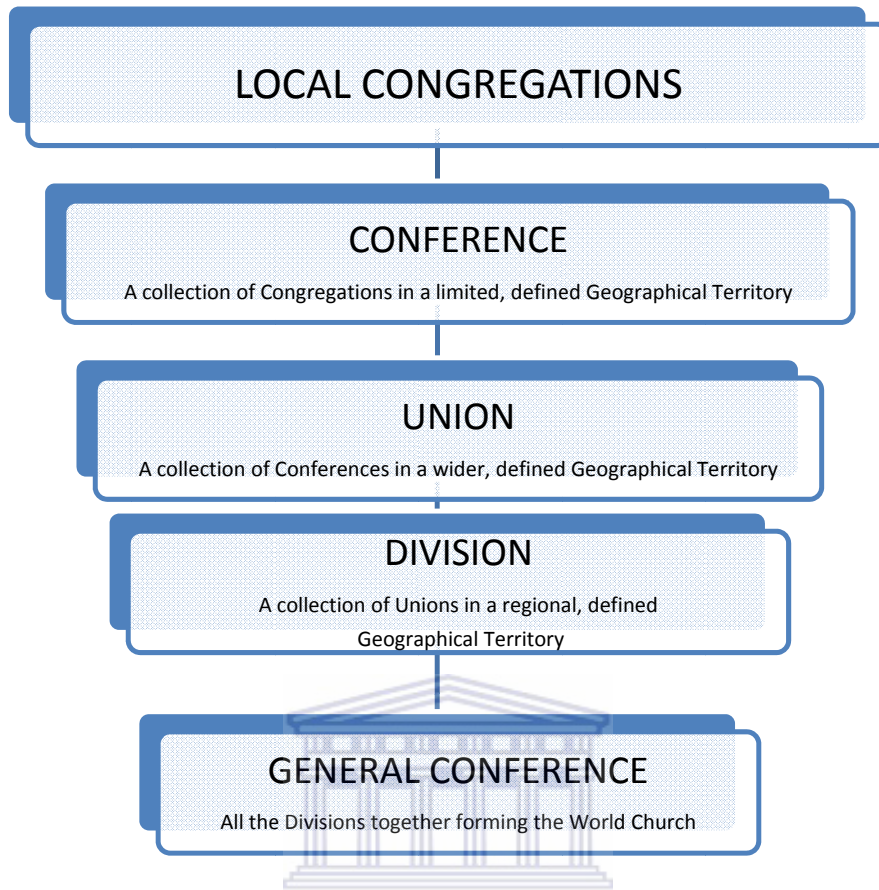


Figure 1

Organizational Structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

The structure in Figure 1 is deliberately illustrated with the local church shown at the top and the General Conference, the world body, shown at the bottom. This is done in order to support the notion that the Church consists of the individual member as the most important component of the Church. The structure is there to serve the member, and not *vice versa*.²³⁸

The Planting of the First Congregations

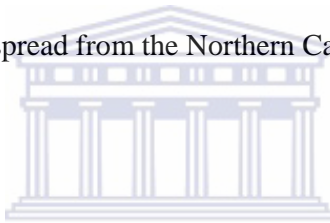
Within the first ten years, the following congregations were established:

1. 1887 – September 27, Beaconsfield Congregation, Kimberley; 26 members

²³⁸ See C. Platjes, *Revisioning the Denominational Ethos and Administrative Structures of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa*, DTh Dissertation, Stellenbosch University, 2007.

2. 1889 – March 2, Roeland Street Congregation, Cape Town; 16 members
3. 1890 – April, Rokeby Park Congregation, in farming area 18 miles from Grahamstown.
4. 1891 – Mid-year, Cathcart Congregation; 12 members.
5. 1897 – March, Mowbray Congregation; 13 members.
6. 1897 – Claremont Congregation established at Union College where it had commenced operation in 1893.

The establishment of the congregations above within the space of ten years indicates the impact of the influence and missionary endeavour of the fledgling Church, with congregations spread from the Northern Cape through to the Western and Eastern Cape.



As with the DRC, the first churches which were established by the Adventists did not set up separate structures for the different races. Whoever accepted the teaching of the Church and were baptized into membership joined the particular congregation of their choice.²³⁹ This was laudable and remarkable, considering that both Van Druten and Wessels, as former members of the Boshoff DRC church, would have been exposed to the separation of that church into at least two congregations,²⁴⁰ with the Coloured congregation having been formed in 1873²⁴¹ – eight years before the DRC Synod officially established the DRMC.²⁴² By the mid-nineteenth century, most of the rural towns had four or five different churches

²³⁹ Sepulveda, *On the Margins of Empires*, 254, 255

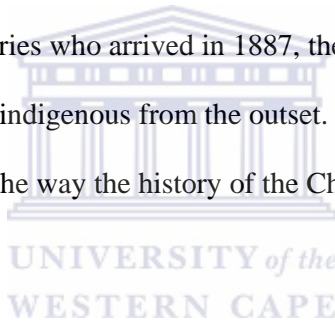
²⁴⁰ By 1887, the DRC and the DRMC were most probably operating in Boshoff. See Elphick and Davenport, 151.

²⁴¹ Loff, 186.

²⁴² Formed in 1881. Elphick and Davenport, 151. See <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/regions/africa/south-africa/uniting-reformed-church-in-southern-africa.html> [September, 2009].

operated under the auspices of the various denominations such as the DRC, Wesleyan Methodist, Anglican, Congregational and Catholic. What is significant is that in the majority of these towns there would be a “Mission chapel” for the ex-slaves and the farm labourers.²⁴³

Van Zyl describes the setting up of the SDA Church in South Africa as the establishment of “[a]n indigenous movement . . . on native soil.”²⁴⁴ His use of the term “indigenous” is correct. When it was formed, as noted above, it was a unitary body consisting of all those persons resident in South Africa who chose to become members. Apart from the influence of the American lay member, Hunt, and the work of the foreign missionaries who arrived in 1887, the observation by Van Zyl is accurate. The Church was indigenous from the outset. This becomes particularly noteworthy as one observes the way the history of the Church unfolded in succeeding years.



R. C. L. Thompson, when referring to the formation of the Good Hope Conference at the end of 1959 refers to this step as: “. . . the first indigenous church to achieve Conference status and become self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating.”²⁴⁵ The Good Hope Conference was a Coloured conference that had been called the Cape Field since being established in 1933 to superintend the work amongst the Coloured community in South Africa. Van Zyl correctly recognizes the establishment of the Church as a whole as being a South African Church consisting of South African members, regardless of race. He is thus correct in defining it as an “indigenous” Church being organized “on native soil.” R. C. L. Thompson, on the

²⁴³ Ross, 45.

²⁴⁴ Van Zyl, 77.

²⁴⁵ Thompson, R. C. L., 261.

other hand, defines “indigenous” as being a church consisting of and catering for the Coloured community as indigenous.

While recognizing that a unitary Church was organized in South Africa, early tension developed, not based on racial grounds, but along the Anglo/*Afrikaner* divide. As noted earlier, the request by Van Druten and Wessels, through the *Review and Herald*, for a Dutch minister was not met. By 1892 agitation had commenced for a Dutch Conference. Phillip W. B. Wessels, writing to W.C. White on October 25 of that year, deplors that “[t]here is no work done here in the Dutch to my knowledge.” He goes on to state: “I think the time is come that we can now have our own conference.” Swanepoel recognizes this tension by indicating that one of the challenges faced by the Church was to “achiev[e] a balance in its European membership between Dutch and English-speaking members.”²⁴⁶ The Seventh-day Adventists Church, by turn of the 20th century, had been planted in South Africa. Churches had been organized. A College had been established along with a Sanitarium and an Orphanage. An organizational structure had been put in place to oversee the work. Mission outreach beyond the borders of South Africa had started.

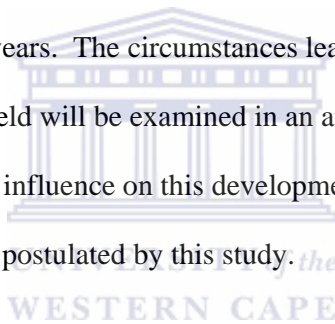
All of this had been done within the context of a country that had been well-Christianised. A social and political system had developed that would impact upon the Church as it became established and grew. How the Church chose to respond to the challenges of this context will be examined as the growth of the Church amongst the Coloured community is explored in the next chapter.

²⁴⁶ Swanepoel, 135.

CHAPTER THREE

THE COMMENCEMENT AND INITIAL DEVELOPMENT
OF THE CHURCH
AMONGST THE COLOURED COMMUNITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

This chapter will examine the growth and development of the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church amongst the Coloured community in South Africa. It covers the period from 1887 when the first Seventh-day Adventist congregation was officially formed, till the formation of the Cape Field in 1933 and events surrounding the Cape Field years. The circumstances leading up to the establishment of the Cape Field will be examined in an attempt to discover what factor(s) exercised the major influence on this development. The factor(s) will be tested against the hypothesis postulated by this study.



Daniel Christian Theunissen

Amongst the farm workers employed by Wessels was a young Coloured man named Daniel Christian Theunissen (1873-1956).¹ While no evidence could be found to suggest that he accepted the new faith of his employer, it is reasonable to assume that he came into contact with the teachings of the Church around 1885 when Wessels first began to observe the Sabbath.² With the working week disrupted in order for Saturday to become a non-working day for Wessels and his employees, it is reasonable to assume that this change would have occasioned discussion between employer and employee to explain the change.

¹ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. II, 1.

² Ibid.

In addition, Wessels was not averse to sharing his new-found-faith with those with whom he came into contact. In fact, he could be described as an aggressive convert to Adventism, seeking out opportunities of informing others of his beliefs. His parents, who lived in Wellington at the time, received a letter from him in which he informed them of his new-found faith. He cited the biblical passages and encouraged them to study it for themselves. Later they were also convinced and accepted the seventh-day Sabbath doctrine.³ An account is given of Davies and Tarr who were travelling from Port Elizabeth to the gold fields of the Transvaal, transporting goods with their wagons. They were passing through Kimberley and needed to camp overnight. As a courtesy to the farmer, Davies approached the farm-house to request permission to remain on the premises till the following day. The farm belonged to Wessels. It was a Friday night, and Wessels, having secured Davies as a “captive audience”, proceeded to share with him his new-found faith. Before they continued on their way, Davies was somewhat convinced, but Tarr, a lay Methodist minister, would have none of it. However, they eventually returned to the Eastern Cape with literature regarding the Sabbath. Tarr, through the study of Scripture and the reading of the literature, later became converted to this new faith and was the first of a family that was to play a prominent role in the fledgling Church in South Africa.

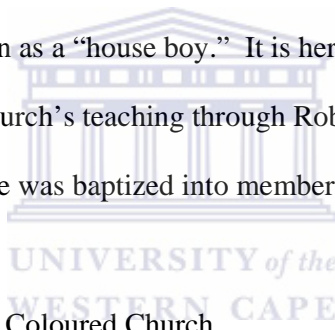
An issue that might have negated his enthusiasm for sharing his religious convictions with persons of colour was his Boshoff connection discussed on page 106. He would thus have been exposed to a philosophy that would have deemed it

³ Olsen, 484.

inappropriate to create a fellowship of believers in which Whites, Coloureds and Blacks worshiped together on an equal footing – politically, culturally and soteriologically.

Whether Wessels attempted to share the Adventist faith with Theunissen or not, it can be said that the influence of the SDA's amongst the Coloured community in South Africa can be traced back, through Theunissen, to the early years of the SDA Church in South Africa.

Theunissen relocated to Cape Town, his place of birth, in 1892⁴ and was taken into the employ of A. T. Robinson as a “house boy.” It is here that he appears to have been exposed to the SDA Church’s teaching through Robinson’s daughter, with whom he became friends. He was baptized into membership in 1893.⁵



Documented Histories of the Coloured Church

However, despite the early exposure of Coloureds to Adventism, it is tragic that the documented histories of the SDA Church in this country pay scant attention to the development of the work amongst the Coloured community. The same can be said for the work amongst the Blacks.⁶ The main texts on SDA history in South Africa, *The Origin and Early History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa, 1886-1920*, an unpublished M.A. thesis by L. Francois Swanepoel (UNISA 1972) and *A History of the Growth and Development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Southern Africa, 1920—1960*, an unpublished DPhil dissertation by Ronald C.L.

⁴ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. II, 1.

⁵ Ibid., vol. II, 2.

⁶ M. I. Buwa, *The Seventh-day Adventist Work in East Griqualand: A Brief Overview of Cancel Mission – Founding, Growth, and Potential: 1952-1983*, v.

Thompson (Rhodes University 1977) are quite comprehensive when it comes to the development of the work amongst the Whites in South Africa. However, the work amongst the Non-Whites is handled as though it is merely a footnote to this history.

Swanepoel states the following in the introduction to his work:

In the following pages the reader will find the history of a church with a well-focused objective: that of taking its particular religious message to all people, *irrespective of their colour*, their religious persuasion, or on what side they were in war-time, and to accomplish this by a wide variety of methods and approaches”(emphasis supplied).⁷

While it might be true that the Church took its message “to all people,” the documented histories, with the all-encompassing titles covering the history of “[T]he Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa” from 1887 to 1960, seems to consider people other than Whites not of sufficient importance to be given as comprehensive coverage in the recorded history of the Church.

Swanepoel

In Swanepoel’s work, the main discussion of the development of the work amongst the Coloured people occupies two pages -- pages 126-127. Further incidental references are made in his thesis. Contrast this with pages 130-133 being devoted to a discussion of a certain Professor Elfers and his activities leading up to 1909 and beyond. While Elfers no doubt had an impact upon the White work, especially with regard to the agitation for Dutch and, later, Afrikaans interests, it is amazing that when a “[H]istory of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa” is

⁷ Swanepoel, xi.

being written, the work of an individual can occupy more space than the work amongst a sizeable portion of the Church. The argument is proffered that insufficient information is available.

In the context of the statement of Swanepoel in which he seems to focus on the attempts of the Church at “achieving a balance in its European membership between Dutch and English-speaking members,”⁸ the attention paid to the Elfers saga is consistent with this focus. The challenge in dealing with this “balance” was to play itself out in the formation of an *Afrikaanse Konferensie* which existed in the Transvaal region from 1968 to 1974.⁹

In fairness to Swanepoel, he qualifies his position by stating that it is “one possible view of what the church was like.”¹⁰ He goes on to express the desire that “other . . . historians” will assist in providing a “clearer understanding” of this aspect of South African Church History.¹¹ The “one possible view” qualification correlates with the position taken by Kalu in *African Theology en Route* in which he argues, that while historiography can claim to be a science “because of the systematic reconstruction of what happened in the past . . . it is becoming obvious that [it] is basically ideology.”¹²

What Swanepoel might have done was to seek a different title for his thesis that would reflect his primary focus on the development of the Seventh-day Adventist

⁸ Ibid., 135.

⁹ See Pantalone’s dissertation.

¹⁰ Ibid., v.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Appiah-Kubi and Torres. *African Theology en Route*, 13.

Church amongst the White sector of South Africa and not as it being “*The*” history of the Church.

R. C. L. Thompson

R. C. L. Thompson continues, in terms of the time period, from where Swanepoel leaves off. Unfortunately, in terms of bias, he continues in the same vein as does Swanepoel. A microcosm of this bias is the way he handles the educational work in South Africa. In giving a background to the history of the White Training School (Helderberg College), he covers the material fairly comprehensively in pages 134-143. However, when a discussion of the establishment of the Coloured Training School (Good Hope Training School) is pursued, pages 143-145 suffice. Both institutions were established around the same time.¹³

As with Swanepoel, the heavy bias displayed by R. C. L. Thompson towards the development of the Church amongst the White sector, could have lead to a re-titling of the dissertation. The focus on the White work is not, in itself, problematic: where the problem arises is the appropriation to a sector of the work the all-encompassing designation of a history of “*The*” Church in South Africa. Thus the title “A History of the Growth and Development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Southern Africa, 1920-1960” could read: “A History of the Growth and Development of Seventh-day Adventists in Southern Africa, 1920-1960.” He would then be a liberty to define the extent to which he would be covering the history of sectors of the Church.

¹³ Helderberg in 1928 and Good Hope in 1929.

Van Eck

P. J. van Eck, in his MEd thesis, *Sewende-dag-Aventistiese Opvoeding: Historiese-Prinsipieel* (unpublished, UNISA 1948), shows a similar bias towards the White work. Once more the two educational institutions established to serve the different population groups are used to illustrate the point.

Two paragraphs are devoted to Good Hope Training School on page 46, while thirty eight pages are on Helderberg College (46-83). Like R. C. L. Thompson, Van Eck waxes lyrical almost to the point of religious ecstasy when discussing Helderberg. When giving the motivation for that institution being the logical successor to Union College and Spion Kop and the emphasis and scope devoted to it, he states:

Aangesien die volledigste toepassing van die Adventistiese opvoedkundige beginsels in Suid-Afrika sig openbaar te Helderberg-Kollege gaan ons meer in die besonder op die geskiedenis en huidige stand van die inrigting in. Hier ook vind die grootste mate van aanpassing van die spesifieke Adventistiese beginsels aan landsomstandighede plaas.¹⁴

Thus in one fell swoop the educational work amongst the Coloureds and the Blacks in South Africa, who, initially had been students at the multi-racial Union College¹⁵ is relegated to institutions which, by implication, did not “conform to the specific Adventist principles” (own translation).

¹⁴ P. J. van Eck, “*Sewndedag-Adventistiese Opvoeding: Historiese-Prinsipeel*.” Med thesis, unpublished, UNISA, 1948.

¹⁵ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. I, 63.

The records indicate that a Primary School for Coloureds was established in conjunction with Union College by 1904¹⁶. A Coloured school was also operational in 1916 in Parow but closed after a short time¹⁷. From 1929 onwards the educational work amongst the Coloured community was revived and continues up to today.

When Van Eck makes his comment (1948), justifying the focus on the White institution, four church schools were being operated for the Coloured community, in addition to Good Hope Training School. In 1936, Van Eck was a staff member at Good Hope Training School, under the principalship of P. H. Mantall.¹⁸ Between 1941 and 1948 (the time during which Van Eck completed his thesis), Good Hope had twenty-one graduates. From 1941-1943, W. H. Hayter had been principal. He was succeeded by G. S. Glass (1944-1947) and O. B. Hanson (1948-1952).

These institutions, set up by the organization on different levels, are adjudged by Van Eck, by implication, as not “conforming to . . . Adventist principles.” Was there a failure in the establishment and operation of the institutions, or did they have the “misfortune” of being Coloured institutions? Can the Coloured institutions be vilified because their progress and development was not as dramatic and remarkable as those of its White sister institution? R. C. L. Thompson sites the “Depression” years as the reason for the lack of progress and development at Good

¹⁶ Swanepoel, 182. See CC Aug 19 1913, March 6 and Aug 13, 1919; CC Session 1912-1920, Jan 8, 1914.

¹⁷ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. I, 63, 64 and vol. II, 3. The Black Training School, Bethel College, traces its origins to the same time. See Swanepoel, 182-183.

¹⁸ Ibid., vol. I, 79.

Hope Training School.¹⁹ However, he waxes lyrical in describing the phenomenal growth and expansion at Helderberg – during those same “Depression” years:

This is how R. C. L. Thompson proceeds to discuss the further development of the two institutions:

The capital outlay at Helderberg College resulted in a building spree on the campus during the twenties unequalled by any previous period. As a final act in an era of expansion of training institutions, Helderberg College took its place among the institutions as the greatest accomplishment of this era.²⁰

The Great Depression also retarded progress and development among the Coloured members. Good Hope Training School established on the eve of the depression, did not receive much attention until 1934 when the first permanent building, a house for the Principal, was erected. The first three class-rooms in a solid brick building were built three years later.²¹

The two institutions which started in 1928 and 1929 respectively sees the one “as the greatest accomplishment of this era” while the other had to wait till 1934 for its first permanent building – a house for its White principal. It is three years later that the first classrooms are built.²² R. C. L. Thompson cannot be faulted for the inequitable distribution of funds to the two institutions. He can be faulted, though, for his unashamed ebullience when describing the development of the one institution²³ and his glibness in then passing off the lack of funding made available to the Coloured School as a consequence of “the Depression.”

¹⁹ Ibid., 167.

²⁰ Thompson, R. C. L., 159

²¹ Ibid., 167

²² Ibid., 157.

²³ Thompson, R. C. L., 358. He states: “Spion Kop College and its successor Helderberg College was the paradigm of Adventist principles and practice in education.”

The apparent dismissive handling of the history of the Coloured and Black work as cited with reference to Swanepoel and R. C. L. Thompson seems to reflect the earlier approach taken by Van Eck. As with the later works, Van Eck could have considered refining the title of his study.

Buwa, Du Preez and Du Pré, and Pantalone

Buwa, Du Preez and Du Pré, and Pantalone all decry the absence of documented histories for the Black and Coloured communities. With Swanepoel and Thompson, part of the reason furnished by them for this phenomenon is the alleged absence of source documents and other material.

When this researcher contacted Pantalone and indicated to him what the focus of this study would be, his comment was, “You are wasting your time.”²⁴ It is true that segments of documents have been lost, destroyed or misplaced over the years. It is true that the early pioneers of the Church have died. It is true that most individual churches have not been as meticulous as other denominations in maintaining records at the local church level. But this does not fully explain why the documented histories of the Church leave a palpable void – the “Black Hole of Seventh-day Adventist Church History”.

²⁴ Telephonic discussion conducted between the researcher and Pantalone, 22 July, 2004.

Marquard suggests that

as long as those who write South Africa's history come from the white minority only, it is likely to be biased against the non-European majority²⁵

Marquard could well have been referring to South African Church History, as this concept can be justifiably applied to SA Church History in general and to Seventh-day Adventist Church History in particular. He goes on to state: "The gaps in South Africa's story will only be filled when Africans and Coloured people begin to write history."²⁶

The Development of a "Coloured Department"

The initial work amongst the Coloured community (1887—1892) is not documented as a separate line of development within the Church in South Africa, as membership was not racially determined. Thus when the Church was formally organized into a conference in 1892 with the formation of the South African Conference, no distinction was made with regard to membership along racial lines. The assumption must therefore be made that, as individuals accepted the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, they were voted into membership in the congregation in closest proximity to them. The assumption must also be made that the churches would most likely have had a mixed membership.

As early as 1915, the Cape Conference Secretary's Record lists 13 churches. Four of those are listed separately when indicating the names and addresses of Sabbath School Superintendents. They are placed under a list marked "Coloured": Salt

²⁵ L. Marquard, *The Story of South Africa*. London: Faber and Faber, 1955, 16.

²⁶ Ibid.

River, Parow, Port Elizabeth (Coloured) and Uitenhage. By March 1922, the Record reflects that there were 17 churches, with two churches in Uitenhage, one designated White and other Coloured. Salt River and Parow, most of whose members were Coloured, are not designated as such, despite the earlier Sabbath School differentiation.

A year later, Port Elizabeth also had two churches listed – White and Coloured. A shift occurs in the manner in which the churches are recorded in June 1923. It is then that the Secretary's Record for the Cape Conference adds, after listing the total membership as carried forward from the previous quarter and adjusted by additions and losses, the words, "*Less Coloured Membership.*" Up to this time all the churches in the Cape Conference were listed alphabetically. From June 1923 the European churches were listed first, followed by the Non-European churches.

In December 1923 the Coloured component of the Conference Church²⁷ is removed from the Conference Church and added as a separate "Coloured" Conference Church. In 1927 the Coloured Conference Church members were once again transferred to the "European" department. It is of interest to note that neither the minutes of the South African Union Conference nor the Cape Conference give any indication of a policy shift that would necessitate the separate recording of the names of the Coloured members.

²⁷ The Conference Church consists of isolated members who do not live close enough to a congregation in order to have their membership there or are members of a Company. A "Company" is a group of members whose numbers are too few to be formed into an organized church. As an interim measure, they are formed into a Company with membership in the Conference Church. During this phase, the Conference Executive Committee functions as the Church Board for the Company.

The removal of the Coloured members and subsequent restoration to the Conference Church is mystifying. This movement was immaterial, as the Conference Executive Committee would serve as the Church Board regardless of whether were included with the White members or not. The fact that the process is reversed indicates that, after four years, the members of the Committee recognized the futility and illogicality of the 1923 action.

Subsequent reports list Coloured churches and membership separately. At this time (1923), there were four Coloured churches with a membership of 86. The White Church had 484 members. In September 1925, the Record further divides the church membership into three categories for the first time: European 511, Coloured 127 and Native 291. Again, it is noteworthy that no official or formal action for this distinction to be introduced is recorded.

From this juncture the work amongst the Coloureds and Blacks placed under the “Coloured Department” and “Native Department” respectively. The Native Department disappears from the Cape Conference record in 1926. It is at this time that the Cape Conference votes to place the Native work under the Union.²⁸ In practice, this meant setting up a Mission Field catering only for Black members. This mission field was known as the Kaffirland Mission Field. In 1933 this field was merged with the Transvaal/Delgoa Mission Field – the field for the Black

²⁸ The following action was taken by the Cape Conference Executive Committee in 1926: “VOTED that we express our favourable attitude towards the disconnection of the Native work from our Conference and its administration by the Union Conference from January 1927.” 202/55/26. An action was taken by the SAUC on December 6 1926 which met at 11:00: “In harmony with the counsel given at the joint session of the Union and Division Committees [held at 09:00 Dec 6, 1926] in the matter of operating the native work in the South African Union, it was voted that beginning with January 1 we operate our native work under the direction of local mission fields instead of local Conferences. The name “Kaffirland Mission Field” appears in the minutes for the first time in the minutes of the 8th of December, 1926 without any action recording the selection of the name.

members in the northern part of the country – into one Field, called The South African Mission Field. At the end of 1935 they were once again split into two, subsequently called the North Bantu and South Bantu Mission Fields respectively.²⁹

By December 1932, the European Department of the Cape Conference reported having 964 members and the Coloured Department, 395.³⁰

The agitation to separate the churches where Whites and Coloureds were worshipping together seems to have taken place around the middle of 1925. Where or from whom it originated is not known. Knowledge of this comes from the response of the congregation where it was mooted. Their response is worth noting in full as reflected in the Minutes of the Cape Conference Executive Committee of June 28, 1925:



WHEREAS, at a meeting of the officers and leading European members of the Wynberg Church held on the afternoon of the 27th inst., every member of the church present expressed the earnest wish and desire for the Wynberg Church to continue as one united church, instead of being separated into European and Coloured churches, and that one church building be built instead of two and that the church building be built at the top of Church Street, therefore,

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with the expressed wishes of the Wynberg Church, the Conference approve of that church continuing as a united church as at present, and that the church building be built on the plot of ground at the top of Church Street, which has been purchased for that purpose.³¹

²⁹ SAUC Exec Mins Oct 1929-Nov 1937; Feb 23 1936

³⁰ The Native Department disappears from the Cape Conference records at the end of 1926.

³¹ CC27/10/25

What is clear from the above minute is the fact that the “European members” and officers of the Wynberg Church were not in favour of a separation. What this action demonstrates is that the pressure to separate the church on racial grounds did not come from the members. It also indicates that there was no external pressure for the church to be split.

However, it is strange that when a decision of such magnitude was taken with regard to the future racial composition of the Church, the Coloured members were not invited or, apparently, consulted. This is remarkable, especially considering the fact that the membership had a significant Coloured component.³² A reason for this could be that the “European members” felt that the Conference Committee would not be concerned about the wishes of the Coloured members, and did not deem it prudent or necessary to include them in the discussion and the decision.

Thus, while the resolve of the “European members” and leaders is admirable, the exclusion of their fellow brethren and sisters is lamentable. It reflected the paternalism of the South African Whites towards persons of colour at that time, which continued and, to a lesser degree, still continues.

Following the action by the Cape Conference Committee to allow the Wynberg Church to remain as a united church, further actions indicate that the congregation continued to lay plans for the erection of a new church building for the group.

Strangely, despite the decision to leave the church “united,” the Building Committee is tasked with planning for the “Wynberg European and Coloured

³² See Cape Conference Secretary’s Record at time of split. 31 December 1930.

church *buildings*” (emphasis supplied). This anomaly – more than one building being considered – is borne out by an action taken in 1928 which indicates that a separate fund had been in existence for the “Wynberg Coloured Church Property.”³³ The action referred to indicates that the money was transferred to the ‘Parow Church Trust Fund.’ This action indicates the Committee’s support of the decision of the Wynberg Church taken in 1925 that they remain one united congregation.

Further minutes approve the plans for a church and the appointment of the builder to be responsible for the construction.³⁴ Strangely, while the church was being maintained as a mixed, united church, the Committee needed to categorize it as fitting into one of the descriptions it had fashioned: European, Coloured Department or Native Department. To wit, in 1926, the Committee voted that the church be “considered as heretofore as a European Church but that their [mission offering] goal be on a half and half basis between the European and Coloured [members].”³⁵

As indicated earlier, the Wynberg Church gives the first example of the attempt to separate the different races. Thompson suggests that a separation was successful in Kimberley in 1929, where a new congregation was formed for the White members, with the Coloured believers remaining behind in the Beaconsfield Church.³⁶ He sees *this* development as the “first step toward a self governing church.”³⁷ It is of interest to note that the Coloured members of the Dutch Reformed Church had

³³ Cape Conference EXCOM Minutes, CC 319/90/28.

³⁴ Ibid., Actions # 6/2/25; 38/13/25; 43/14/25.

³⁵ Ibid., CC201/55/26.

³⁶ Thompson, R. C. L., 374.

³⁷ Ibid.

formed a congregation in Beaconsfield in 1882, which was their incorporation into the Mission Church in 1884.³⁸

Another separation that took place can be found in the record of the formation of the Elim Church – the Coloured Church which was separated from the George Church in 1931. The Cape Conference Secretary's Record shows for the quarter ending 30 September 1931 that the George (White) Church experienced a "loss" of 11 members through transfer. The same record shows Elim Church, under the Coloured Department, with a transfer in of 11 members.³⁹

Going back to Wynberg, it is an ironical footnote to Church History that the Wynberg Dutch Reformed Church, which was, and still is, situated in Church Street in the Cape Town suburb of Wynberg, separated into a White and Coloured Church at the beginning of 1881, before the formation of the Mission Church in August of that year.⁴⁰ The Seventh-day Adventist Church almost went the same route in 1925. However, despite the wishes of its members, it separated in 1930 as a result of an action taken by the Cape Conference Committee, three years before a separate Coloured organization was established. Thus, as with the DRC, a separate Coloured Church existed in Wynberg while, organizationally, there was no separation. Coincidentally, the SDA Church in Wynberg was situated at the top of Church Street, on Carr Hill, not more than 100 meters away from the DR Church.

Thompson further cites the establishment of the training school for Coloureds, Good Hope Training School, in 1929/30 as the beginning of the "progress toward a

³⁸ Loff, 162.

³⁹ Cape Conference Secretary's Record, 30 September 1931.

⁴⁰ Loff, 124, 125.

self-governing Coloured church.”⁴¹ No record is found of a request by the Coloured members in Wynberg or Kimberley for a separate, “self-governing church.” No record is found of a request by the Coloured members for a separate school. From 1887 to 1929, a period of forty-two years, the Church had developed with no record of agitation or desire of the Coloured members to be separated.

It is of interest to note that while by 1916 the Cape Conference Secretary’s record reflects three churches that could be called Coloured with further Coloured churches listed in later records, it is only the 1929/30 events that are described as “steps towards self-government.” The Salt River, Parow and Uitenhage Churches developed as Coloured Churches from their inception. The same development occurred in Port Elizabeth. It is only when a church that consisted from the outset of a mixed membership is split along racial lines that it is described as the “first step toward a self-governing church.” The presence of churches which from the outset had been comprised of Coloured membership is not viewed as progress towards “self-government.” One is left to speculate as to whether a justification for separating mixed congregations, where members, as in the case of Wynberg, chose to remain together is sought in proclaiming such separation as promoting “self-government.”

Similarly, schools for Coloureds had been organized both in 1904 and 1916, apart from the fact that students of Colour attended Union College. However, when Helderberg College is established in 1928 and it is reserved for Whites only, with the Blacks being transferred to Spion Kop, and a separate school being established

⁴¹ Thompson, R. C. L., 261.

for the Coloureds the following year, the act of separation of a mixed institution is, again, described as a “step toward a self-governing church.”

Following the 1925 Wynberg resolution, an action was taken the following year by the Conference in wording that could be described as “quaint” if it had not been such a significant event in the history of the Church. The motion which is recorded indicates the “favourable attitude” of the Committee “towards the disconnection of the Native work” from the Conference.⁴² This was to take effect from January, 1927, with the “Native work” becoming the responsibility of the SAUC.

The gradual, incremental process of institutionalized separation can thus be traced from 1923 where the Coloured membership is separated in the records of the Cape Conference. This is followed by the Native membership being listed separately in 1925. In the same year, agitation appears to have arisen to separate the Wynberg Church. Two years later, the Native work is “disconnected” from the Conference.

In 1928 a school is established for Whites only, with a Coloured school being established in 1929. During the same year, the Beaconsfield church is split into two, creating separate Coloured and White Churches. Over a period of seven years events were building up to a climax that was to culminate into the establishment of three distinct organizational units catering for the administration of the Church along racial lines.

⁴² Cape Conference Executive Committee Minutes, 202/55/26

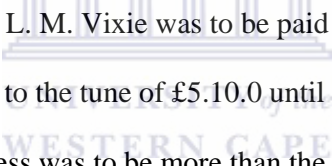
Before we examine this development, we need to consider some additional events during the 1923-1930 period which illustrate the differentiation between the European and Coloured Departments within the same Conference.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee held January 20, 1926, in the Masonic Hall, Port Elizabeth, the following salaries were voted for that year:

L. Moffitt	£36.10.0	
Willmore	21. 0.0	to increase to £27.10.0 upon marriage
Miss A. C. Flemming	16. 0.0	
F. G. Clifford	27. 0.0	
Miss S. Mouke	14. 0.0	plus bonus covering fare home
D. C. Theunissen	4. 0.0	
A. F. Minter	5. 0.0	
W. C. Tarr	31. 0.0	plus £25.0.0 for wife's illness and a bonus of £15.0.0 to cover trip to Pondoland.
Brother Simon	3.10.0	
Brother Kobe	3. 0.0	
Brother Amos	3. 0.0	
Bradford Scott	3.10.0	

A note is then added: "All other native brethren to be paid the same as they received last year."

The voting of these salaries for 1926 appears to be routine. However, when one considers that D. C. Theunissen was an ordained minister, while Misses Flemming and Mouke were secretaries, then the discrepancies become a matter for comment. The only apparent reason for the disparity in salaries is that Theunissen was Coloured and the latter two were White. The last four individuals listed were Black. Willmore's salary had been fixed at £18.0.0 on April 30, 1925, but we find a £3.0.0 increase for 1926. If marriage took place during that year, which can be assumed was planned, hence the provision, it would have increased by £9.10.0 year on year. Yet the note with regard to the rest of the "native bretheren" was that their salaries were to remain unchanged.



The same minutes reveal that L. M. Vixie was to be paid an excess amount over and above the rent allowance to the tune of £5.10.0 until "alternative housing" could be found. His rent excess was to be more than the salary of one of the ordained ministers in the same Conference. If the difference in salaries could be attributed to gender, age, education, experience or work assignment, then they would be no cause for comment, but the constant in the salary discrepancies is race.

To further illustrate the disparity in dealing with employees of different races in the same Conference, the request of Brother Mozoyana made in 1926 is considered. He apparently needed to buy a saddle for his horse (or bicycle!) and requested a loan from the Conference to assist him with the purchase. An action was taken that "in the light of present financial conditions, a loan to Brother Mozoyana, to

purchase a saddle, is not thought advisable.”⁴³ This seems a reasonable decision. However, in the same set of minutes, on the same page, in a decision taken the same day, it was voted that “five pounds be allowed to Brother Kruger to repair [his] cart.”⁴⁴ Brother Mozoyana was Black, Brother Kruger was White.

During the same sitting of the Conference Committee, £3.0.0 and £5.0.0 is voted respectively for monthly rent for Bro Clifford and Elder Moffitt.⁴⁵ Three actions later, it is voted that Amos Magalela “be allowed 10/- per month and D. Mtsikeni one pound per month on rent.”⁴⁶ Two were White and two were Black.

Apart from the difference in monthly rental, this action reveals that the salaries of some of the employees did not even equal the rent allowance of others.

The minutes of January 1926 reveal further anomalies: A. Koen’s salary is voted at £7.0.0.⁴⁷ His job description – a tent master in the East London evangelistic campaign. Keeping in mind that D. C. Theunissen, an ordained minister, was earning £4.0.0 per month, it once again raises the question as to what the determining factor in this discrepancy was. What renders this particular case ludicrous is that A. Koen was considered to be White by the Conference.⁴⁸ Du Preez and Du Pré records that

⁴³ CC 90/26/26, 4 February, 1926.

⁴⁴ CC 88/26/26

⁴⁵ CC 85/25/26/ and 86/25/26.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 89/26/26.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 102/28/26

⁴⁸ See CC 181/47/26; 225/57/26; 197/53/26.

[h]e was the eldest son of Johannes Jacobus Koen, a ‘person of colour’ from Willowmore and Johanna Heyns, an Afrikaner from Beaufort West whose father was the magistrate there.⁴⁹

As with Theunissen, he was thus a person of colour. He moved from being a tent master to where, after assisting in some additional evangelistic outreach programmes, he was employed by the Cape Conference as an evangelist/pastor. In 1929 he changed his surname to Kohen.⁵⁰

He was later invited to “connect with the Coloured Department. His “status” subsequently changed and a concomitant reduction in salary was effected to bring it into line with other Coloured employees. He went on to be ordained while working for the Cape Field in 1957.⁵¹ Ironically he and the majority of his family were classified as White after the introduction of the Population Registration Act in 1950. Despite this, he was employed and worked for the Coloured section of the Church until his retirement at the end of 1965.⁵² The Koen case illustrates how salary differentiation was applied based on race. Later in this study the issue of A. V. Sutherland is examined in which the same anomalous practice is applied.

A further action is elaborated upon to illustrate what could be considered the inequitable treatment of employees within the Conference. Towards the end of 1926, Action #211/57/26 records that £109.0.0 was transferred from the Coloured

⁴⁹ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. II, 15.

⁵⁰ Ibid., vol. II, 16, give the date for this change as 1929. His daughter, Ivy Petersen, lives in Kuils River and was interviewed regarding these issues. She was unclear as to when the name-change took place and the reasons behind the change.

⁵¹ CF318/120/57

⁵² CF332/89/65

Department and placed in the President's budget to assist with the payment of his salary which had been set for 1927 at £36.10.0 per month.⁵³ This translated into £442 for the year. Thus approximately ¼ of the President's salary was being taken from the Coloured Department. The assumption can be made that there must have been a shortage of finances, hence the action taken to find alternative funding for the President's budget. This seems to be borne out by the decision to retrench Minter and Theunissen from the beginning of 1927.⁵⁴ The motivation for their retrenchments is given in the minutes as "shortage of funds." This seems fair enough.

However, the situation raises the question: If there was a shortage of funds, how do you justify retrenching *two* ministers whose combined income was £108 per annum and transfer their budget to pay the President, whose salary was £442 per annum? An answer could be furnished that, in terms of operational needs, two ministers are more easily expendable than the Chief Executive of the Conference. This seems fair enough.

Yet, an examination of the minutes reveal that during the same year in which the *two* (Coloured) ministers found themselves without employment due to a shortage of funds, the Committee places calls for *four* (White) employees to join the Cape Conference.⁵⁵ The minutes indicate that Brother Potter, one of the four, is employed during the year at a rate of £25-0-0 per month.⁵⁶ The same cash-strapped

⁵³ CC 197/53/26.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 216/58/26 and 219/58/26.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 224/62/27 – Call for D. F. Tarr; 225/62/27 – Call for J. Raubenheimer; 237/65/27 – Call for Miss A. G. Flemming; 238/65/27 – Call for Elder B. M. Heald; 242/67/27 – Call for J. N. de Beer. (Calls for Heald & Raubenheimer rescinded in 243 and 244/67/27).

⁵⁶ Ibid., 246/67/27.

Conference votes a “push bicycle” allowance for Brother Edwards (White) of 4/- per month.⁵⁷ While there may have been a shortage of funds at some time during 1927, why were Minter and Theunissen not re-employed later in the year when the situation “improved” – for it must have “improved” for four (White) workers to be called and additional allowances approved? Or did they simply suffer the misfortune of being “Coloured” and thus expendable?

During 1928 Theunissen is still listed, by his absence from the salary audit, as being unemployed, with a travel stipend of £2-0-0 per month being made available to him. Potter, employed during the previous year, receives a £3-0-0 per month increase for 1928. A salary increase of £3-0-0 per month is also given to Koen, with a further £8-0-0 per month increase being provided for after his impending marriage.⁵⁸ Also during 1928, F. M. Robinson was appointed treasurer in the Coloured Department, with an additional £5-0-0 per month over and above his regular salary being paid to him for part-time work done “amongst European Churches.”⁵⁹ That “allowance” was more than the monthly salary of the unemployed Theunissen. It is only in March 1928 that Theunissen finds employment through a call received to join the Kaffirland Mission Field.⁶⁰ His own Conference was unable to employ him for fifteen months due to “a shortage of funds”, while the same Conference was able to increase salaries and allowances for their White employees in addition to engaging the services of additional White staff.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 218/58/26.

⁵⁸ Koen was still considered a White worker at this stage.

⁵⁹ CC 279/82/28.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 324/91/28.

Further to the above, the Conference votes in 1929 to accept the “proposition made by the General Conference of sending out a Coloured worker, to assist in the Coloured Department of the Cape Conference.”⁶¹ Theunissen, a Coloured ordained minister, is retrenched because of lack of funds, released to the Kaffirland Mission Field, and then the Conference votes to bring in an expatriate “Coloured worker.” The irony of the matter was no doubt not lost on some members of the Committee, as shortly after passing the motion to accept the “General Conference proposition” a call is placed “to invite D. C. Theunissen to connect” with the work of the Coloured Department of the Cape Conference.⁶²

The salary rates for 1929 for the Coloured Department were as follows:⁶³

Department Head:	£34-0-0
W. M. Hodgson	34-0-0
A. G. Koen	18-0-0
Mrs Bull	4-0-0
D. C. Theunissen	5-0-0

Theunissen, whose salary had been set at £4-0-0 for 1927 (the year he was retrenched), returns and finds his salary, two years later, increased by £1-0-0. Koen, whose salary had been £7-10-0 in 1927, finds himself earning a handsome £18-0-0 two years later. Theunissen, the ordained minister with twenty three years service, was Coloured; Koen, employed for the first time in 1926 as a tent-master,⁶⁴

⁶¹ Ibid., 357/97/29.

⁶² Ibid., 359/97/29.

⁶³ Ibid., 399/104/29.

⁶⁴ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. II, 15.

was considered to be White. These anomalies continued in the Church in South Africa well into the 1990's.

One further illustration of the inequitable handling of issues pertaining to the European and Coloured components of one Conference: In 1930, the Executive Committee considers the needs of the Coloured Department with reference to the evangelistic programme of that department. This in and of itself was laudable. In discussing the matter, the Committee expresses the wish that,

Since it is desirable for the Coloured Department to have their own evangelistic equipment,

VOTED that the European Department donate to the Coloured Department the old tent, old benches and old chairs, and also the old set of electrical equipment.⁶⁵

Considering that this was one Conference served by a single administration and a single Executive Committee, the paternalism – the “donating” of old (possibly redundant) equipment to the Coloured Department – that is reflected by the action negates any praiseworthiness of the gesture. It illustrates that, while no formal action had been taken by either the local churches, the Conference Executive Committee, the Constituency or the SAUC, the Committee considered the Coloured Department as a *de facto* separate organization.

Formal Separation

In a far-reaching action taken by the Cape Conference Executive Committee, five years after the Wynberg Church's non-racial stand and three years after voting the

⁶⁵ Ibid., 498/139/30.

“Native work” out of the Conference, the following motion was passed during the sitting of the Committee over the period September 8 and 9, 1930:

That in harmony with the action of September 7, 1930, of the South African Union Committee, we approve the principle of separate Churches for our Coloured members throughout the Cape Conference and that we push forward in the development of our coloured work as a separate Department, maintaining separate Church organisations⁶⁶

It is interesting to note the motivation given for this resolution as reflected in the preamble to the action, quoted below. Because of the long-term effects of this decision, it is quoted in full:

WHEREAS our work among the Coloured people of the Cape Conference has shown very encouraging growth in certain sections of the field, and the prospects are bright for building up a much larger constituency in various parts of the Province as we extend and intensify our evangelistic programme, and
WHEREAS our Coloured believers have made the most marked progress in their own experience, and in Sabbath School, Missionary Volunteer and general Church activities, developing strong leaders and efficient Church officers in Churches organised for and officered by our Coloured believers under the direction of the Coloured Department⁶⁷

This preamble is a direct duplication of the action taken by the SAUC on the Sunday of that week.⁶⁸ It seems to be that the Cape Conference Committee, which

⁶⁶ Ibid., 594/165/30.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ SAUC EXCOM Minutes, Action # 259/52/30, taken on 8 September 1930. The full minute reads as follows: WHEREAS our work among the Coloured people of South Africa has shown very encouraging growth in certain sections of the field, and the prospects are bright for building up a much larger constituency in various parts of the Union as we extend and intensify our evangelistic programme, and

had acceded to the request of the Wynberg Church to remain a mixed congregation, met with inordinate haste on the Monday and Tuesday of the same week to ratify the action taken by the SAUC Executive Committee. With the undue haste, it would have been well nigh impossible to confer with the Wynberg Church, or any of its other churches on either side of the racial spectrum, with regard to their wishes or desire in the matter. This is in stark contrast with the many years of negotiations and discussions that have taken place within the Church in an attempt to reverse the racial separation that still exists in the Church.

Despite the fact that the World Church has declared Apartheid a heresy; despite the fact that the World Church has pronounced upon the South African Church with regard to its maintenance of racially segregated structures; despite the fact that the South African Church has denounced Apartheid as being sinful and pledged itself to unify the Church; despite the fact that the Church has confessed its sins of omission and commission in its submission to the TRC in 1998, the Church still struggles to find common ground between the different racially divided Conferences.

A sentiment often expressed by those belonging to the predominantly White Conferences is that they do not want to change “in response to pressure.”

WHEREAS our Coloured believers have made the most marked progress in their own experience, and in Sabbath School, Missionary Volunteer and general church activities, developing strong leaders and efficient church officers, in churches organised for and officered by our Coloured believers under the direction of the Coloured department, THEREFORE, VOTED that we approve the principle of separate churches for our Coloured members throughout the South African Union Conference, and that we urge our Conferences to develop their Coloured work as a separate department, maintaining so far as possible separate church organisations for our Coloured constituency, and encouraging our Coloured believers to build up their own local church and the Coloured department to the highest possible point of efficiency.

Consultation needs to take place and consensus needs to be reached. And yet, when the separation took place, the Committee of the Cape Conference seemed to need no consultation or consensus in deciding to summarily jettison part of the Body of Christ who had been fellowshipping as a united, organized body for forty-three years. Now, in 2009, after 79 years of separation the cry is “We want to decide to unite or to remain separated as a result of our own decision, not due to pressure from external sources.”⁶⁹

What makes the Cape Conference’s hasty action even more mystifying is the fact that no action is recorded of a desire on the part of the Conference to consider separation. Even at the Constituency Meeting held during 1930, there is no item in the Session Minutes indicating any inkling of a separation of the Coloured Department from the Cape Conference.⁷⁰ The action might have been understandable and justifiable if they had been responding to a Union action based on an earlier recommendation from the Conference and its constituency. But no such recommendation came from the Conference. Du Preez and Du Pré imply that the pressure to impose the separation came, not from the Union Conference, but from elsewhere:

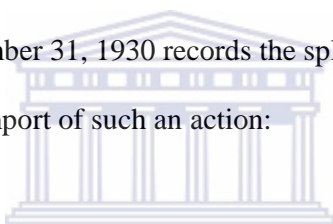
⁶⁹ A sentiment expressed consistently in Cape Conference minutes since 1978 and enunciated by Dr A. B. D. Ficker at the court case heard in the Bloemfontein High Court, Jan 23 – 25, 2009. Dr Ficker has served as the head of the Business Department at Helderberg College, a member of the Cape Conference Executive Committee, a member of various merger and task force committees and has played a prominent role in agitating for maintaining separation between the different racial groups in South Africa. A classic recollection of his attempt at thwarting merger comes from the 1990 SAUC Session held at Phillip Saunders Resort in Bloemfontein. He had made up a collage of newspaper clippings which painted a BLEAK picture of the economic forecast for South Africa’s economy. In trying to forward an economic reason why the SAUC and the SU should not merge, he lifted the collage and, with a comically apropos Freudian slip, he stated, rather dramatically: “The future is BLACK.” The researcher was present at that meeting. This statement can be attested by those present. One of these persons is Phillip Platjies, Associate Professor at Helderberg College.

⁷⁰ Cape Conference Session Minutes, 1930.

[I]n 1929-1930, W.H. Branson, Division President, presided over the separation of white Adventist worshippers from coloured Adventist worshippers in South Africa.”⁷¹

The authors go on to state that Wynberg members “were bitter about this move and blamed Branson for the forced separation.”⁷² Du Preez, 9 years old at the time, was a member of Wynberg church, along with his mother and siblings.⁷³

Coupled to this action by the Cape Conference was the recommendation that “the European members of the Wynberg Church transfer their membership for the time being to the [European] Claremont church”⁷⁴ The quarterly Cape Conference Secretary’s Record of December 31, 1930 records the split in a sterile entry which cannot begin to reflect the import of such an action:



Wynberg TRANSFER
56 Coloured Department

31 Claremont Church

87

In the 1925 ruling to allow the congregation to remain mixed, the decision was taken by the European members of the Church without the apparent input of the

⁷¹ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. I, 4.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Du Pré, *Against the Odds*, 18.

⁷⁴ Ibid. A sequel to this is recorded on January 15, 1950 where the Wynberg Church (European) was voted into the Sisterhood of Churches in the Cape Conference. Cape Conference Constituency Meeting Minutes of the 39th Business Session. Thus, for 20 years the White members of the Wynberg Church had to join a sister congregation and continue to worship with them while the Coloured members continued to worship in the original building previously occupied by the mixed church. Eventually the Coloured members, due to the Group Areas Act, had to sell the building on Carr Hill and purchase a small property in the Coloured section of Wynberg. This is where they still meet today in Mortlake Road, Wynberg. The White Church eventually died out and disappeared completely.

Coloured members. Five years later, when the decision to not only separate an individual congregation but to create a totally separate organization to administer the Church on racial grounds, those who were most affected by the decision are similarly not involved in the decision making process. The minutes of the SAUC EXCOM list those who were present at the meeting of the 7th of September as follows: N. C. Wilson, J. R. Campbell, H. L. Ferguson, F. E. Thompson, S. G. Hiten, L. L. Moffitt, W. L. Hyatt, A. Floyd Tarr, J. F. Wright (part-time).

The Cape Conference EXCOM that convened the next day and carried over to the 9th consisted of the following individuals: L.L. Moffit, W.D. Smith, R.G. Morton, L. Billes, S. G. Hiten, G. E. Shankel. By invitation: A. F. Tarr, N. C. Wilson, J. F. Wright and Q. H. Jubber.



Thus, at both meetings – the SAUC EXCOM and the Cape Conference EXCOM not one representative from the Coloured Department, other than L. Billes, the White director for the Coloured Department, was present. As stated earlier, the time which had elapsed between the Union and Conference Committees makes it difficult to envisage a process of consultation with the stakeholders of the different constituencies.

Eight months later, at a further meeting of the Cape Conference Executive Committee, the issue of “a change in the name of the Coloured Department to some other name more satisfactory to our coloured believers” was raised.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Cape Conference EXCOM minutes, CC 126/31/31, held 29 May, 1931

The membership of the Committee had not undergone significant changes.⁷⁶ What is noteworthy is that D. C. Theunissen is listed as one of the attendees at the Committee. He is indicated as an “invitee.” It must be assumed that the courtesy was extended to him because of the discussion on the naming issue that was to arise. The matter was discussed “at length” but “no satisfactory name could be decided on.” It was decided to defer the discussion and decision to “the next time the Committee should meet.” No record is found of the matter being raised by the Committee at its next sitting or any other subsequent sitting.

An examination of the preamble to the 1930 action provides what could be considered to be the motivation for the proposal to separate the Coloured Department from the Cape Conference:

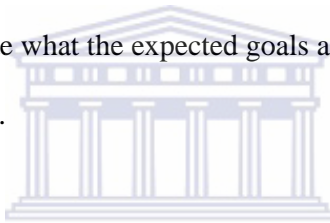
1. The work among the Coloured people of the Cape Conference had shown encouraging growth;
2. The prospects were bright for building up a much larger constituency in the Province through an intensified evangelistic programme;
3. Marked progress had been made by the Coloured believers in their own experience as well as in the different departments of the Church;
4. Strong leaders and efficient Church officers had been developed in the churches organized by the Coloured Department for the Coloured believers.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Ibid. Present: L. L. Moffit (chairman), Bretheren W. H. Hurlow S. C. Hiten, R. G. Morton, L. Billes. By invitation: D. F. Tarr, D. C. Theunissen, J. I. Milford, A. F. Tarr, A. E. Nelson, P. E. Willmore, N. C. Wilson, J. F. Wright. (Elder N. C. Wilson – Union President.)

⁷⁷ Cape Conference Executive Committee Minutes, 594/165/30.

An analysis of the factors listed above poses the question as to how any of the factors provide justifiable reasons for the separation of the Coloured believers from the Cape Conference. What appears to have been supplied is a description of the state of the Coloured Department at that time. In no way is an attempt made to link the statement to a reason for the separation.

At the inception of the Cape Conference, or any time later in its development, no record can be traced that appears to give the European membership the mandate to develop the work amongst the members of colour up to a certain stage of growth – numerical, conceptual or administrative. If that was the case, the reader would have expected the preamble to state what the expected goals and targets were and to what extent they had been reached.



Again, if that was the case, the reader would have been able to make some sense of the four factors listed. They could then be viewed as quantifiable motivation for the separation of a group of its members from the main body of the Conference in 1923 into a Coloured Department, to be followed by the 1930 action. As in 1923, when the Secretary's record lists the Coloured membership separately for the first time, no attempt is made to provide an explanation for the separation in 1930.

However, in the absence of any other material, the researcher is left to accept the preamble as the motivating factors which lead to the decision to separate further the Conference into what would become three racially divided organizational units – the (White) Cape Conference, the (Black) Kaffirland Mission and the Cape Coloured Field.

The first factor cited in the 1930 action refers to the “encouraging growth” of the Coloured membership. The following graph indicates the growth in membership of both the Coloured and European membership of the Cape Conference over a ten year period from 1923 to 1932.

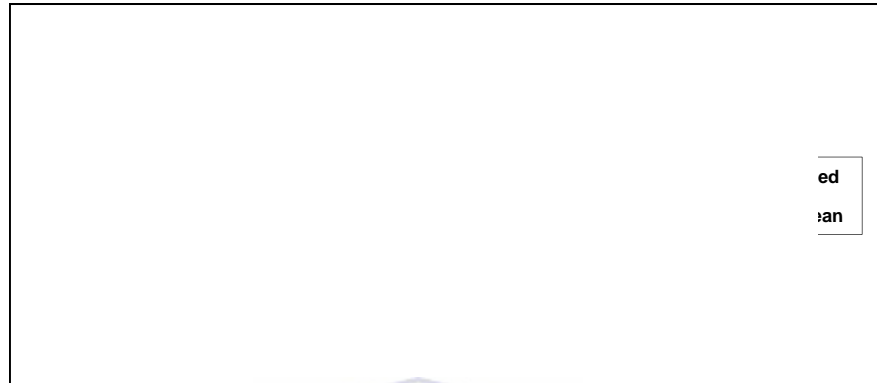


Figure 2
Membership Growth, 1923-1932

While the growth is encouraging, with the Coloured membership increasing from 86 to 395 during the period, representing a 459.3% increase, what was there about the “encouraging growth” that necessitated a separation? If there was a negative growth rate or the membership figures had remained static over a period of time, one could perhaps find some motivation in that the Coloured work was being neglected and therefore had to be separated in order to promote growth. However, measured by the percentage increase, this could not have been a cause for concern.

During the same period the European work increased by 199.1%, having grown from a membership of 484 to 964. While not as spectacular, the growth was no less encouraging. It would thus seem anomalous that an organization that had grown from 570 members to 1359 members over a span of 10 years – an increase of 238.4% -- would present “encouraging growth” as a reason to separate.

The “encouraging growth” might have been considered to be a threat, in the same way as the Egyptians saw the growth of the slave population of the Israelites as a threat to their existence and conspired to destroy the male offspring of the Hebrews. If this theory is pursued, *sans* the genocide, then the factor of “growth” as a motivation for separation becomes logical.

Given the growth rate of 1923-1932, an extrapolation of the figures at the same percentage increase for the subsequent decade would translate into a Coloured membership of 1 814 and a European membership of 1 919. By the end of the third decade following the initial separation of a Coloured Department from the rest of the Cape Conference, the Coloured membership would have been 8 326, with the European membership 3 820 by 1952. Actual membership figures reveal, however, that while the percentage increase was not as dramatic as the first decade under discussion, the projections, if done in 1930 at the time of the SAUC and Cape Conference actions, would not have been remiss in predicting that the Coloured membership would eventually surpass that of the European membership. The following graphs show the extrapolated and actual growth from 1932 to 1952:



Figure 3
Extrapolated Growth based on 1923 – 1932 Data

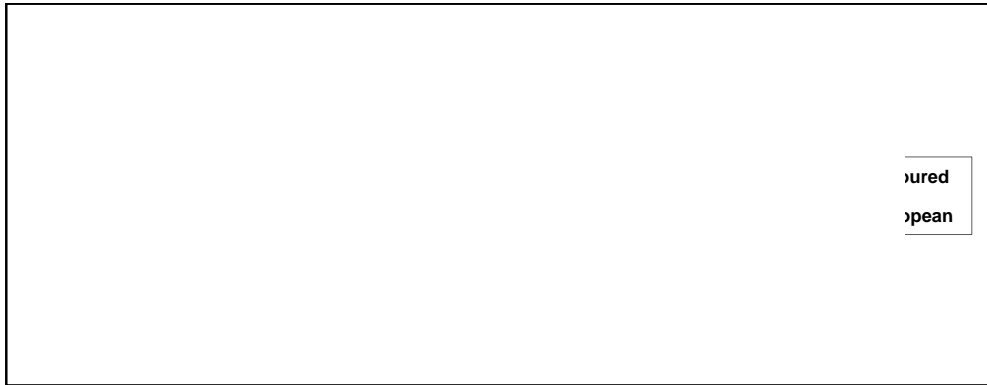


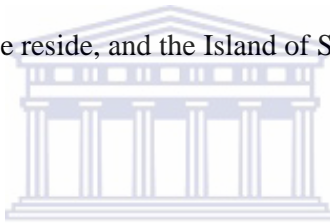
Figure 4
Actual Membership Growth 1932 – 1952

The second factor listed in the 1930 action is that “the prospects were bright” for building up a much larger membership in the Province through an aggressive evangelistic programme. As with the first factor, the question is once again posed as to how the “bright prospects” for increasing the membership translated into the need to separate the Coloured believers from the Cape Conference. Would these prospects have diminished in lustre if the Coloured believers remained in the Conference? If so, how? That question remains unanswered, as the sterile record gives little indication as to the thinking of the leadership of the day.

An additional issue arises. Factor number two cites the positive prospects for increasing the membership within the “Province.” The “Province” referred to was the Cape Province, as that was the territory served by the Cape Conference at the time of the action. Thus the stated objective of the Cape Conference was to separate the work of the Coloureds from that of the Europeans in the Cape Province to encourage growth in *that* province. Juxtaposed to the SAUC action, which intended the growth of the Coloured work throughout the territory of the Union, the

Cape Conference apparently foresaw a setting up of a parallel organization in the Cape to superintend the Coloured work.

When the separation eventually transpired, a parallel organization was established in the Cape,⁷⁸ but the territory under its jurisdiction covered the entire country, as well as the island administered by the SAUC. The objective of the parallel organization was to “carry the everlasting gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to all people particularly those of Coloured race within its territory, and to assist in spreading the Advent message to all nations of the world.” The territory referred to “consist[ed] of such portions of the Union of South Africa where members of the Coloured race reside, and the Island of St. Helena in the South Atlantic Ocean.”⁷⁹



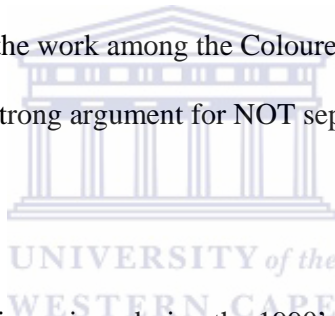
The third factor cited by the Cape Conference is the marked advancement of the Coloured believers in their “experience” and the progress made in the different departments of the Church. The researcher is left to wonder as to what is intended by the term “experience.” Does it refer to the spiritual condition of the members? Does it refer to the development of the abilities and expertise of the membership? The fact that reference is made to “their own experience” as a separate issue to progress in “the different departments of the church” could lead to the conclusion that the two concepts are mutually exclusive and that the minutes refer to the spiritual wellbeing of the members in addition to the ability of the believers to function adequately within the different departments of the Church.

⁷⁸ The initial name was “The Cape Coloured Field.” This was later changed to “The Cape Field.” See page 159.

⁷⁹ See Constitution and Bye-Laws of the Cape Field and The Good Hope Conference.

Once again the question is raised as to how and why this would be a reason for separating the groups within the Cape Conference. If being together in one Conference was stifling the conceptual and numerical growth of the Coloured Department, an argument could be made that the separation might have promoted such growth. If the creation of a separate conference was reflecting the wishes of the Coloured membership, then it might lend legitimacy to the process.

However, an examination of the preamble to the 1930 minutes and the years preceding it does not provide an argument or reasons for the separation based on growth or desire on the part of the Coloured Department. On the contrary, it presents a positive report of the work among the Coloured section of the Conference and furnishes a strong argument for NOT separating the Coloured Department.

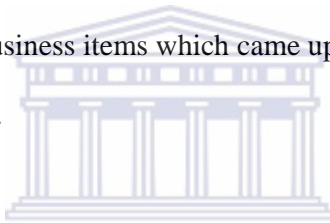


An issue raised by some in discussions during the 1990's between the three racially constituted conferences in the Cape raised the argument that the bringing together of the different groups would retard growth. This argument has been used to motivate the keeping apart of different racial groupings. Yet, when analysing the 1930 motivation for separation, positive church growth arising out of a unified conference is given as reason *for* separation.

Following the 1930 actions, it appears as though it was "business as usual." The minutes indicate that the Coloured Department was still active as part of the Conference. This is borne out by the minutes through to 1933 that indicate that nothing had changed in the operations of the Conference.

At the 33rd Constituency Meeting of the Cape Conference which commenced 17 January, 1932, no discussion is entered into with regard to the actions taken by both the SAUC and Cape Conference Executive Committees. The churches from the Coloured Department are listed among the regular delegates. The same applies to the previous two Constituency Meetings (1928 and 1930).

However, an examination of the minutes of the 34th Constituency Meeting of the Cape Conference (1937), reveal that the Coloured Churches are not listed, neither are any Coloured delegates indicated as being present. Neither the President's report nor any of the other business items which came up before the meeting make any reference to a separation.



The minutes of the meeting has this entry: “Elder Hurlow, as President, next rendered his report detailing the various activities in the Conference in a very clear and interesting way.”⁸⁰ The minute continues to summarize his report with regard to Mission Funds; the “Harvest Ingathering” campaign; the need for more employees; the increase in tithe payers from 50% to 60% of the members; the need for Laity and Ministers to join hands in spreading the gospel.⁸¹ No mention of a possible separation of the Coloured Department from the Cape Conference. No reason is supplied as to why no further action was taken between the 1930 action and the 1932 constituency meeting. The next section will discuss the fact that a separation took place in 1933. If the minutes of the 1932 and 1934 sessions are perused, no indication is given of a possible, anticipated, envisaged or actual

⁸⁰ Cape Conference Minutes of the 34th Constituency Meeting, 1937.

⁸¹ Ibid.

separation. And yet a separation took place. It was as if a pebble had been thrown into the ocean with no evidence of its having penetrated the surface the instant it disappeared.

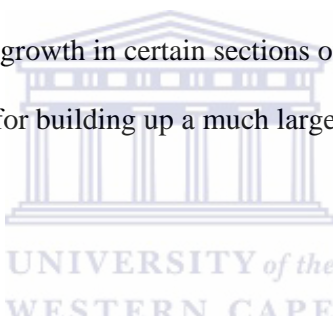
The Coloured Department had been severed from the Cape Conference between the 33rd and the 34th Constituency Meetings – the Meeting of 1937 continued its business without a hiccough, pause or acknowledgement that a sector of the Church had been detached from the Conference. It was “business as usual.”

The Establishment of the Cape Field

The foregoing section referred to the seven-year build-up between 1923 and 1930 which culminated in the 1930 resolutions of the SAUC and the Cape Conference. No further significant developments seemed to have taken place after 1930, apart from the 1931 Cape Conference meeting where no resolution was made with regard to a new name for the Coloured Department.

A significant and far-reaching chain of events were set in motion in 1933 at a constituency meeting of the Southern African Union Conference. This meeting was held during April 1933 in Bloemfontein. A Camp Meeting for the Cape Conference was being held simultaneously in the same city. In the list of delegates to the SAUC Constituency Meeting, the Coloured Department was represented by D. C. Theunissen and B. W. Abney, apart from L.L Billes, the White Cape Conference employee mandated with the responsibility of overseeing the Coloured work. The membership report was given as a consolidated figure for Europeans and Coloureds – 670 in 1925 and 1 358 as at the end of 1932.

In the report of the president of the Cape Conference to the Union session, no inkling is given as to the possibility of the formation of a separate organization for the Coloured membership of the Conference. Considering the fact that the issue had been raised and voted by both the SAUC EXCOM and the Cape Conference EXCOM three years earlier, it is difficult to understand why the president of the Cape Conference failed to include this as a recommendation or as a report to the Constituency Meeting. Secondly, upon examining the motivation given in the 1930 minutes, it would not be unreasonable to expect that a report would have been rendered on the “work among the Coloured people of the Cape Conference [which] has shown very encouraging growth in certain sections of the field, and the prospects [were thus] bright for building up a much larger constituency in various parts of the Province.”



On the 23rd of April, 1933, the Union president, N. C. Wilson, as chairman, referred to the work done by the “Survey Commission.”⁸² This Commission was set up to study ways of making adjustments to the organizational structure of the Union in order to make it more cost-effective in the light of the Depression in the world-wide economy in general and South Africa in particular. Elder Wright, the South African Division president, also addressed the meeting on the issue. A resolution was then put to the gathered assembly. As with other actions that have been quoted in full in this study, this resolution is quoted in its entirety due to its importance:

After carefully considering various suggestions for effecting economies in the South African Union, the Survey commission

⁸² The minutes or report of the “Survey Commission” referred to were not traced by the researcher.

Recommends to the South African Union Conference the uniting of the Natal-Transvaal and Cape Conferences and the establishment at Bloemfontein of the headquarters of the amalgamated Conference together with a central Book Depository to replace the two depositories now being operated by the two Conferences.

The Commission Further

Recommends that the Coloured work become a department under the South African Union.

The Recommendations of the Survey Commission were unanimously adopted. It was Voted that authority be delegated the Union and Local Conference Committees, with the General Conference and Division Representatives, the workers here assembled and six lay members from each conference, that these constitute a Committee to put into effect the recommendation of the Survey Commission and to make such adjustments in organisation as may be necessary, to appoint officers and Committees and to transact such other business as might be done by a duly delegated body (emphasis supplied).⁸³

The Committee that was to put into effect the recommendations as voted by the SAUC Constituency Meeting was a fairly large one, consisting of forty-three individuals. Of that number, as far as can be determined, one person was Coloured: D. C. Theunissen.

The issue needs to be raised as to the importance of consultation and inclusion of Coloured opinion on an action that was to have a significant impact upon the work of the Coloured Community of that period and beyond. With hindsight, the import

⁸³ SAUC Constituency Meeting Minutes, 16th Session, 23 April 1933.

of those actions would reverberate right through to the 21st century, with March 19, 2006, being the constituency meeting where the Cape Conference would once again revert to a conference based solely on territorial boundaries and not on racial classifications.

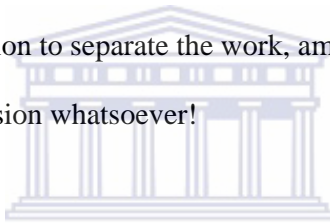
The actions taken by this committee that commenced its work on the 23rd of April, 1933, at Victoria Park, Bloemfontein, were to be binding on the entire constituency of the SAUC. In fact, it was “empowered to make the necessary changes in the Constitution as may be affected by the amalgamation.”

The minutes of this Committee record the full process engaged in over a period of three days. It meticulously records the disbanding of the Cape and the Natal-Transvaal Conferences. The process of setting up a nominating committee to appoint officers for the new Conference is recorded. Issues concerning a name for the amalgamated Conference, its locality, etc., are preserved in writing for posterity. In addition, the Committee oversees the combining of the Transvaal/Delgoa Mission Field and the Kaffirland Mission Field into one body called the African Mission Field. The Committee proved to be thorough in executing its mandate – except for one aspect of the resolution adopted at the Union Constituency meeting.

Included in the recommendation of the Survey Commission was that “the Coloured work become a department under the South African Union.” Another way of framing the resolution could have been “to separate the Coloured Department from the Cape Conference, thereby creating an all-White Conference.” That would have

appeared racist. A much more palatable nomenclature was to vote that the work of the Coloured Department be placed “under the South African Union.” What was being recommended would put into effect the 1930 resolutions of the Union and the Cape Conference. However, a careful study of the minutes reveals no action taken or motion tabled with regard to the “Coloured work.”

Attention must again be drawn to the fact that actions had been passed by both the SAUC and the CC during 1930. This was now followed up by the 1933 action. Yet no reference is made to the action or its implementation in the SAUC or CC sessions following the 1930 actions. When the 1933 session sets up a committee to implement the recommendation to separate the work, amongst other issues, it does not seem to merit any discussion whatsoever!



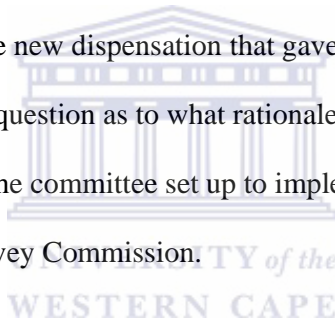
The first reference to the “Coloured work” is found in the Bylaws to the new constitution. In Article VI, under the heading Local Mission Fields, Section I. It reads as follows:

The Union Conference in its sessions shall elect for each local Mission Field *and the Cape Coloured Field*, a Superintendent, a Secretary, a Treasurer and an Executive Committee who shall hold office for a period of two years and in between sessions these offices shall be filled by the Union Conference Executive Committee sitting in counsel with three representatives appointed by the Mission Field Committee (emphasis supplied).

Thus is recorded the creation of the first separate organizational unit within the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa for the Coloured Community – *as a constitutional bylaw*. Like a pebble thrown into the ocean, disappearing the

moment it penetrates the surface, leaving no trace of it having been swallowed up in the vastness of the deep, the Coloured members and churches, that had been a part of the Cape Conference since its inception as the South African Conference, now found themselves in a organizational unit that, in its very name, was racially constituted – the Cape Coloured Field.

In the bylaws, provision is made, between sessions, for the Executive Committee of the Union to fill any vacancies that might occur in the Field Executive Committee or its Officers. At such a meeting, three representatives of the Field would be present. Mention is once again made of the lack of representation on the Committee that fashioned the new dispensation that gave birth to the Cape Coloured Field. It raises the question as to what rationale was given to restrict the Coloured representation on the committee set up to implement the recommendations of the Survey Commission.



When examining the establishment of the Cape Coloured Field as an outgrowth of the Survey Commission's report and the work of the Committee subsequently set up to implement its recommendations, the question must be raised as to what the basis was for the establishment of the Cape Coloured Field. The 1930 minute cites conceptual and numerical growth in its preamble. The 1933 action has the Survey Commission's mandate as its basis – to investigate and recommend ways and means to effect cost savings within the organizational structures of the Church in the light of the Depression. What were the reasons for the separation; those given in the 1930 SAUC and Cape Conference minutes or those found in the 1933 Survey Commission's report?

If the 1930 preamble served as the motivation for the separation, then the discussion with regard to the motivating factors as contained in the preamble would be pertinent. If the 1933 reasons are cited as the motivating factor, then the following question needs to be asked: Would a reversal of the Depression circumstances warrant a reversal of the 1933 action? This seems to be the case in two of the three provisions put into effect by the 1933 session.

The 1933 Victoria Park committee brought about the following organizational changes: The Cape Conference amalgamated with the Natal-Transvaal Conference in 1933 to form the South African Conference;⁸⁴ The African Mission Conference was formed as a result of merging the Transvaal/Delgoa Mission Field with that of the Kaffirland Mission Field; The Cape Coloured Field was formed by removing the Coloured Department from the Cape Conference and placing it under the South African Union.

By 1935 the financial position appears to have improved rather dramatically to the extent that the provisions made only two years earlier to soften the blow of the Depression could be revisited. The South African Conference was disbanded and the “the old plan reverted to for the Natal-Transvaal Conference and Cape Conference to operate separately;”⁸⁵ The African Mission Field is once again divided into two as had previously been the case, but this time under the names of the North Bantu Mission Field and the South Bantu Mission Field. However, when

⁸⁴ Minutes of a meeting held at Bloemfontein at 2.30 p.m., April 23, 1933 of all available delegates of the Cape Conference together with workers of the Cape Conference and Workers of Institutions within that Field. CC412/98/22. This meeting was held during a camp meeting being conducted at Bloemfontein. Recorded minutes for the Cape Conference subsequently continue from 1936.

⁸⁵ This note appears in the CC minutes between the 1933 and 1936 minutes.

the Cape Conference is re-formed and reconstituted at the end of 1935, it resumes operations *sans* the Coloured Division. The Cape Coloured Field, created as a result of the same action that brought in what proved to be temporary measures to carry the Church through the Depression years, is left as a separate organizational unit. Thus the work in the Cape was now firmly segregated along racial lines.

It would no doubt require a good deal of cynicism to propose that the 1933 action purportedly based on the exigencies of the Depression was an elaborate ploy to separate the Coloured Department from the Cape Conference. However, that leap of cynicism is not so difficult to make when an examination is made of the pre- and post-depression arrangements.

The following is a diagrammatic representation of this process:

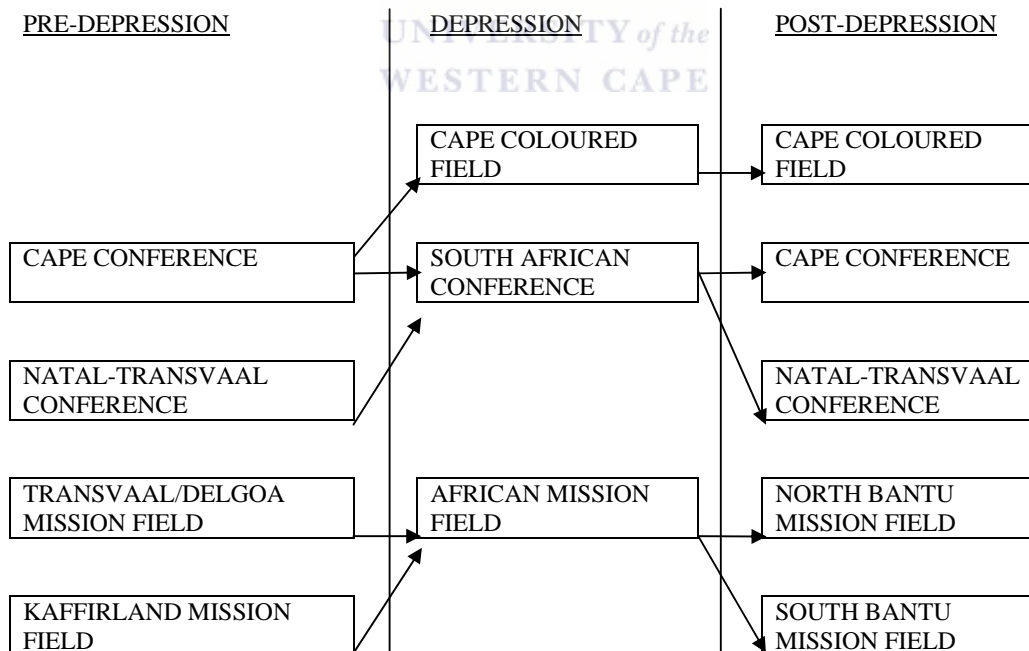


Figure 5

1933 Action and 1935 Sequel

Figure 5 represents the situation prior to the implementation of the Survey Commission's report, the temporary arrangement during the depression and the scenario after the 1935 realignment. Figure 6 illustrates and argues for the situation whereby the reversion to the status quo of the pre-depression period would have been the logical progression, given the motivation in the preamble to the 1933 separation-action.

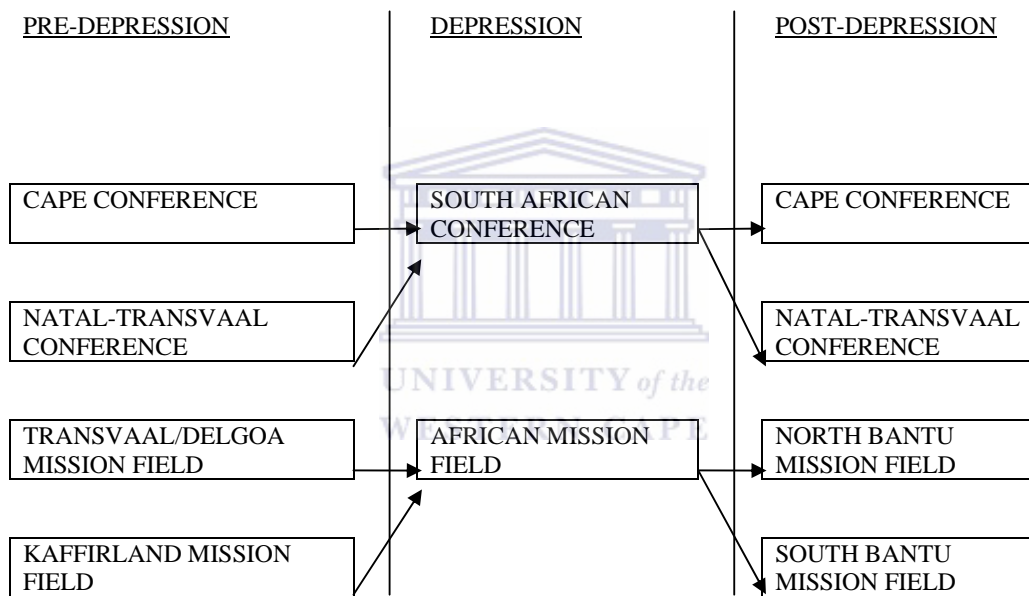


Figure 6

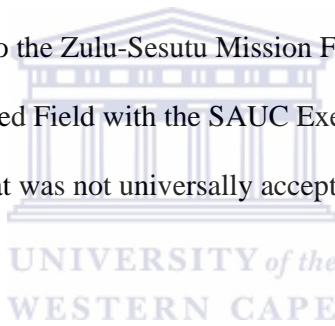
Possible Alternative to 1933 Action and 1935 Sequel

The only change that would have thus been effected in 1935 would have been a name-change for the Transvaal/Delgoa Mission Field and the Kaffirland Mission Field to the North Bantu and South Bantu Mission Field respectively. Logic cannot be employed to account for the post-Depression arrangement as portrayed in

Figure 5. A logical arrangement can, however, be seen in Figure 6. The cynic cannot be blamed for suggesting that a darker motive, other than the Depression, was behind the 1933 action.

After the 1935 Bylaw recognition of the establishment of the Cape Coloured Field, the name itself gave rise to some contention. The first Superintendent of the Field was L. L. Billes who had been the head of the Coloured Department in the Cape Conference. On 17 Jan 1936 it was voted for him to transfer to Zulu-Sesutu Mission Field.⁸⁶ He was succeeded by J. N. de Beer.⁸⁷

Prior to Billes' transferring to the Zulu-Sesutu Mission Field, he raised the issue of the name of the Cape Coloured Field with the SAUC Executive Committee. Apparently it was a name that was not universally accepted by the Coloured constituency.



In 1931 the Cape Conference had invited D. C. Theunissen to attend the executive committee in order to discuss the matter of a name for the proposed Coloured section of the Church – called the “Coloured Department” at that stage. As stated earlier, no resolution was achieved and the matter was referred to a later meeting. This meeting never materialised. When the Victoria Park Committee met in 1933, the name, as found in the Bylaws to the new constitution, “Cape Coloured Field,” was affixed to the new organizational unit of the Church.

⁸⁶ SAUC EXCOM Minutes, Action 1444/331/36.

⁸⁷ Ibid., Action 1446/332/36

However, in 1934 Billes raised the issue regarding the nomenclature, indicating “that the use of the word ‘Coloured’ was objectionable to a number of respectable Cape Coloured people.”⁸⁸ The response of the Committee is worth noting. A vote was taken indicating that “for general purposes” the field would be subsequently known as “The Cape Field of Seventh-day Adventists.” This appears to be a reasonable response to the concerns raised by Billes reflecting the fact that there were those members within the constituency who did not want the name of the organization to be racially determined or descriptive. Nonetheless, the Committee still felt compelled to incorporate a racial component into the Field. The minute goes on to state: “[T]hat there be added in brackets underneath the title the words ‘Coloured Department’ for listing in the denominational Year Book and also for legal and other purposes.”⁸⁹ What those “legal and other purposes” were is difficult to determine. The same action goes on to state that the account of the Field be changed from “Cape Coloured Field” to “Cape Field.” In this “legal” matter, the word “Coloured” was not considered necessary, and yet the Committee saw it necessary to include in the action that it be understood that “Coloured Department” would be placed under the new title.

Why the Church in South Africa found it necessary to append a racial appellative to the organizations set up for the Non-White membership is mystifying. When the Cape Conference was dissolved in 1933 and reconstituted in 1935, no change was effected to the name; it was not now called “The Cape European Conference.” Similarly, with the reestablishment of the Transvaal and Natal Conferences, the

⁸⁸ SAUC EXCOM Minutes, Action 1044/228/34.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

racial designation was not appended to it. With the establishment of the organization for Coloureds, the leadership found it necessary to append the appellative that contained racial overtones. This was in keeping with the name given to the Field that was set up to cater for the Black membership in the Cape. It was first called “The Kaffirland Mission Field.” The effect of this was tantamount to a section of the organization for African Americans being called “The Nigger Mission Field.” When it was dissolved in 1933, it became part of the new African Mission Field. The year 1935 saw it reconstituted as the South Bantu Mission Field.

The term “Kaffir” has always had pejorative connotations within the South African context. When the Native Department was separated from the Cape Conference in 1926, it was formed into the “Kaffirland Mission Field.” Not having access to the individuals involved in the naming of the Mission Field, it is difficult to understand the reasoning behind the nomenclature used in 1926. Not even in government regulations or acts – as crass as the Mines and Workers Amendment Act of 1926 might have been in making reference to “barbarous and underdeveloped peoples”⁹⁰ – was the term “Kaffir” used officially. Assuming, in the absence of any documented evidence, that the geographical location of the area in which a large percentage of the Xhosa speaking members of the Cape Conference resided might have been called “Kaffirland”⁹¹ in off-the-record discussions in 1926, the use of the

⁹⁰ Worden, 84.

⁹¹ The district which today encompasses King Williams Town and East London in the Eastern Cape was annexed by the British as British Kaffraria in 1845. By 1866 it had been incorporated into the Cape Colony and the name was dropped officially. See Frescura, *Transkei*, in <http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/places/villages/easternCape/transkei.htm> [September, 2009]. The establishment of the Kaffirland Mission Field took place 60 years later.

term in the name of the Field reflects an imbedded attitude of the European South African Church towards the indigenous South African.

I. B. Burton, in his reminiscences as a pioneer missionary in South Africa, frequently refers to the Black inhabitants of the country by the term “Kaffir”.⁹² The more refined term of “Native” was later used, with this being the term used in the Cape Conference books when the Church was compartmentalised into the three racial groups: European Department, Coloured Department and Native Department.⁹³ Even though this was the nomenclature of choice, the Church recognized the pejorative nature of the designation, as reflected in an action taken by the SAUC in 1925. At that time a vote was taken that the word “native” be dropped from the credential cards, and that “mission department” be substituted, and that the Union have a supply of cards printed reflecting the change.⁹⁴

An anomaly arises from an action taken not long after the name-change to the “Cape Field” with the “Coloured Department” appendage. The South African Union Conference voted to become a member of the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR).⁹⁵ According to the institutes’ website, the SAIRR was established in 1929 as the first “first national multiracial organisation to work for goodwill and to conduct research into race relations.”⁹⁶ The constitution adopted in 1932 stated its objective as working “for peace, goodwill and practical cooperation between the various sections and races of the population of South Africa.”⁹⁷ How

⁹² See Burton, 11,29,87,88.

⁹³ Cape Conference Secretary’s Record, September 1925

⁹⁴ SAUC EXCOM mins. 4 July 1925.

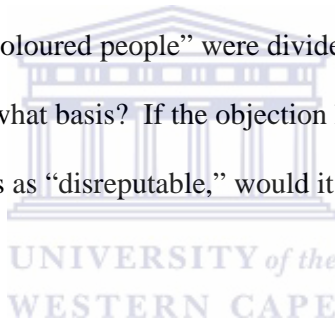
⁹⁵ Ibid., 1104/241/34

⁹⁶ <http://www.sairr.org.za/about-us/history-of-the-institute> [September, 2009].

⁹⁷ Ibid.

this squares with a system where sections of the Church had to be described by a racially-based appellation is difficult to fathom. And this despite the fact that of the members of that section expressed their disquiet with regard to the racial designation.

A further comment needs to be made in connection with the name-change: As cited earlier, Billes reported that the name “Cape Coloured Field” was objectionable to a number of “respectable Cape Coloured people.” In this seemingly innocuous comment is enshrined the insidious ideology of class distinction, with deference being accorded the “respectable Cape Coloured people.” The researcher is left to wonder whether the “Cape Coloured people” were divided into “respectable” and “disreputable” and if so, on what basis? If the objection had been raised by persons possibly considered by Billes as “disreputable,” would it have been tabled before the Committee?



A similar scenario played itself out in a Committee held three months prior to this: On the 10th of April 1934, the SAUC committee met, at which time the educational facilities for “our Cape Coloured people” was discussed.⁹⁸ It was indicated that there was a “need for the services of a fully qualified and experienced Coloured man who should connect with the Good Hope Training School.”⁹⁹ This was a positive move – wishing to improve the standard at the school. The minute refers to “a fully qualified and experienced” individual. If the criteria had been left at that, it would have demonstrated the *bona fides* of the SAUC in seeking to provide adequately for the needs of the school.

⁹⁸ SAUC, 991/213/34

⁹⁹ Ibid.

The action goes a step further by indicating that the person being sought needed to be “Coloured.” This could be interpreted as the SAUC seeking to ensure that members of the racially composed Field were advanced in leadership opportunities – an early manifestation of affirmative action, perhaps. However, apart from the requirements for the teacher with a rider indicating a racial basis for employment, the action calls for “a fully qualified and experienced Coloured man who should connect with the Good Hope Training School, *a man acceptable to the better class of Cape Coloured people*” (emphasis supplied).¹⁰⁰

How was “the better class of Cape Coloured people” defined? An item from the South African Division minutes that appears in 1946 refers to a request made to the South African Union “to appoint one or two representative coloured workers from the Cape Field to attend the Division Council.”¹⁰¹ Gold Theunissen was appointed by the Union, apparently fitting the description of being a “representative coloured worker,” as his name appears in the Plans Committee of the Council held 28 May, 1947.¹⁰²

When the names of individuals who served on or were invited to the various committees and councils of the early years are scrutinized, it appears as though the “better class” or “respectable” or “representative” Coloureds were those who would not appear in terms of physical features and appearance to be very different from their European brothers. Anyone looking over the gathering would not notice that a person of a different “race” was present. Thus the names of D. C. Theunissen, G

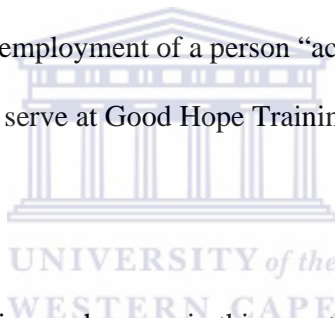
¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ SAD 3078/666/46.

¹⁰² Ibid., 3212/688/47.

Theunissen, W. J. Arnold, E. Heideman, K. Landers, S. J. Fourie, P. Jackson, Mrs J Bailey, Miss A.V. Sutherland, M. Isaacs, Mrs Douglas, Mrs E. Solomons, Mrs D. C. Theunissen, D. la Kay, Mrs K. Landers, J. J. Parkerson, Langford, Mrs N. Nolan, and Rayners appear at various committees and sessions in the early years of the Cape Field.¹⁰³ These individuals, by and large, would have been able to take their seats alongside their White brothers and sisters without creating too much discomfort due to the fact that they were either one or two generations away from having European ancestry – as no doubt was the case with some of the White members – and thus would fit in with the assembled group.¹⁰⁴

Returning to the issue of the employment of a person “acceptable to the better class of Cape Coloured people” to serve at Good Hope Training school, the action continues by stating that,



WHEREAS, Not having such a man in this country nor the means to employ him if he were available, therefore
VOTED, To respectfully request the General Conference to find such a man for us and to agree to provide for his support in the same way as that provided for Elder B. W. Abney.¹⁰⁵

The records do not indicate that the General Conference was able to “find such a man.” The researcher is left to wonder who the Union eventually appointed that would be “acceptable to the better class of Cape Coloured people.”

¹⁰³ SAUC Constituency Meetings, 1936, 1942 delegates listed.

¹⁰⁴ Interviews with Petersen, Adonis.

¹⁰⁵ SAUC991/213/34

An assumption must be made that European appointees were automatically acceptable to the “better class of Cape Coloured people” as no discussion or minute is recorded with regard to the appointment of White staff. The management of the Good Hope Training School and the Cape Field remained under White control through to 1975 and 1960 respectively. White departmental officers and White ministers were appointed without question to serve the Cape Field. However, when a Coloured person was considered for employment at the school of “our Coloured people” his acceptability or otherwise by the “better class of Cape Coloured people” comes into question.

We need to pause at the juncture to explore whether the perception existed amongst the White leadership that the Coloured community was divided into the “better class” or “respectable” or “representative” and, by implication, the “lower class”, “disreputable” and “unrepresentative”. An alternative was that the “better class”, etc, considered themselves to be such and had introduced their own form of “social apartheid” within the Coloured ranks and urged their claims above those of the “lower class”, etc. A third possibility would have been that the European leadership employed a “divide and rule” strategy, giving consideration to those viewed as being closer to the White community in appearance and “culture”, thus creating an alliance. This “alliance” could be manipulated to allow White domination to proceed unchallenged.

The South African Church struggled to come to terms with a sector of the population sometimes referred to as “God’s step-children.” In this regard, the Church was a microcosm of society. The European Colonists from the outset had

no difficulty in relating to the indigenous inhabitants of South Africa. In common with European colonization elsewhere, distinct lines of separation were established, with the superiority of the Europeans unquestioned in the minds of the settlers and forced on the native occupants of the countries they subdued, either through military occupation or economic subjugation.

However, as is sometimes facetiously stated, nine months after Van Riebeeck arrived in the Cape, the first person of mixed race was born¹⁰⁶. With the arrival of the slaves from Malaysia, Indonesia and elsewhere, the scene was set for the emergence of a whole new variation in the South African population. Passing European sailors, resident employees of the Company, Free Burghers, adventurers, travellers and others, all played their part in ensuring that the mixed population grew rapidly. These persons of mixed heritage became the nucleus of the progenitors of the population group that was later called the Cape Coloureds.

Subsequent generations of persons of European origin or descent continued to form sexual alliances with the indigenous inhabitants of the country as well as with the imported slave population and other non-South Africans who were not of direct European decent. In addition, as the “Coloured” population grew, further relationships developed between the White South Africans and the persons of “mixed heritage.”

¹⁰⁶ Du Pré, *Separate but Unequal*, viii

The difficulty experienced by the White population was that these offspring were part of their own flesh and blood¹⁰⁷. While considered to be “bastards” and “illegitimate”, the ties of kinship were a reality that could not be denied or wished away. This resulted in cognitive dissonance within the White community – the rejection of those who were Non-White on the basis of the latter’s “inferiority”, juxtaposed with the recognition of the kinship arising from systemic and systematic fraternization¹⁰⁸. The Coloured offspring were indeed “flesh of [their] flesh and bone of [their] bone.” And the challenge to the White population was “How do we relate to ‘our’ offspring?”

This was reflected in the approach to the franchise question. In the early history of the Cape, a qualified franchise was given to the Coloured community. This became a cause of contention in the Bloemfontein and Sand River Conventions, with the British dominated Cape Colony still wishing to maintain the status quo by allowing a qualified franchise for the Coloureds. With the formation of Union in 1910, the issue once again raised its head.

The anomaly arises in the fact that, while Coloureds were given the franchise, albeit qualified, none were recorded as having been elected to parliament.¹⁰⁹ However, it is noteworthy that the country’s first baronet, Andries Stockenström, and the first member of the British House of Lords, J.H. de Villiers, were two Coloured gentlemen, both of whom became members of parliament. It appears that, once they were elected to parliament, they were considered to be no longer “one of

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 16. Du Pré quotes NP van Wyk Louw: “Die Bruinmense is ons mense, hoort by ons.”

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 22-23.

¹⁰⁹ Ross, 48.

them” but now “one of us – the ruling class” and were thus no longer considered “Coloured – an inferior, servant class,” but White – a member of the ruling class.

The Church had its own “Stockenström” and “De Villiers” in Koen (Kohen), discussed earlier, and A. V. Sutherland. The latter’s case is interesting, in that it engenders discussion on the part of Du Preez and Du Pré who argue for greater recognition for this lady as a person of colour who was marginalised by the White Church in South Africa. Her story is presented as a case study in how the Church related to an employee who was in reality Coloured but was initially accepted as White due to various factors.

Case Study: The Saga of A.V. Sutherland

In *A Century of Good Hope*, Du Preez and Du Pré refer to a “pioneer educationists” within the SDA Church.¹¹⁰ She was Miss Adeline Victoria Sutherland (1887-1964), known to many as “Auntie Vickie.”¹¹¹ Reference is made to her as “the founder of Adventist Education amongst coloured people.”¹¹² An indication of the elevated status she occupies in the minds of contemporary Coloured SDA educational institutions is demonstrated by her being honoured by Good Hope High School in 1993 by having the ladies’ residence named after her.¹¹³ This was done, according to Plaatjes, to give recognition to her within the Coloured community as the first principal of Good Hope Training School. However, her story goes beyond simply the account of one of the many employees and pioneers the Church had. Her story

¹¹⁰ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. II, 9.

¹¹¹ Ibid., vol. II, 7.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Interview: P. P. Plaatjes, Good Hope High School Principal, 14 September, 2004.

illustrates one of the anomalies of South African racial policies and the way the Church responded to the anomalous situation.

Claremont Union College was established by the Church shortly after its formal establishment in South Africa in Kenilworth in 1893. Included in its student body at the turn of the century were Kirsten, Adeline (hereafter referred to as Victoria) and Helen Sutherland. Victoria's parents, among the first converts to Adventism in the Cape, had moved close to the school specifically to enable their children to attend the Adventist School.

Victoria, who graduated in 1904¹¹⁴ at the age of 17, commenced teaching at a “day school established for the Heisterbach church.”¹¹⁵ She also served at the Maranatha Mission, established twenty-five miles from Grahamstown in 1906,¹¹⁶ and Kolo (in Basutoland),¹¹⁷ amongst other places. According to Du Preez and Du Pré, the reason for her serving at Heisterbach for such a short period was that one of the young men, Phillip Venter, took a liking to her. Alas, his father discovered that she was ‘of mixed ancestry’ and forbade the relationship.¹¹⁸ Shortly thereafter she was moved to the Maranatha Mission.

The year 1924 found her working at Bethel Mission, Butterworth, Transkei.

Conditions of labour were not very favourable as is seen by the action taken by the

¹¹⁴ Pantalone, 104.

¹¹⁵ *South African Missionary* III, 7, July 1905, p. 3. Swanepoel, 105, describes the Heisterbach congregation as “[t]he first Seventh-day Adventist congregation composed entirely of Dutch-speaking members”

¹¹⁶ Swanepoel, 126.

¹¹⁷ *African Division Outlook*, XXV January 1, 1927, p.4, and XXVI February 1, 1928, p.10 and November 22, 1928, p. 4.

¹¹⁸ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. II, 8.

SAUC Committee in 1925 in which it was stated “that if Bethel could not arrange accommodation for Miss Sutherland after the arrival of A.P. Tarr and family, the administration should then erect a wattle and daub cottage for her, not to exceed 15 pound in total outlay.”¹¹⁹

During 1928 she is listed as being both at Kolo Mission¹²⁰ and at Spion Kop Training School.¹²¹ It was from Spion Kop that she was called to “connect with the training school for the Cape Coloured people at the Cape.”¹²²

This school, called the Good Hope Training School,¹²³ commenced in the Salt River Church building in 1929,¹²⁴ as a property for the School had not been purchased as yet. It was only at the commencement of 1930 that the committee that had been given the responsibility for identifying the piece of property for the erection of the School was able to report to the SAUC Executive Committee with a recommendation for the purchasing of ground.¹²⁵ At the end of April, 1930, the property was ready for occupation and the school moved over from Salt River to the farm “Riverside” in Athlone. Miss A.V. Sutherland, the principal, moved over with the student body.¹²⁶

In June, 1932, she was relieved of the principalship with the reins being taken over by the superintendent of the Cape Field, L. L. Billes, for the remainder of that

¹¹⁹ Thompson, R. C. L., 111. See SAUC EXCOM Minutes June 20, 1925.

¹²⁰ Thompson, R. C. L., 109.

¹²¹ SAUC EXCOM Minutes, Dec 5, 1928.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ SAUC EXCOM Minutes, action #14/2/29, 31 October, 1929.

¹²⁴ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. I, 75.

¹²⁵ SAUC EXCOM Minutes, action #135/28/30, 3 February 1930.

¹²⁶ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. I, 76.

year.¹²⁷ R. A. Buckley took over as principal in 1933.¹²⁸ The reason given for her being “relieved of her principalship” is noted in the SAUC EXCOM minutes as follows:

In view of Miss Sutherland’s present condition of health, it is VOTED that we relieve her of the principalship of the Good Hope Training School for the balance of the year.
VOTED that we pass a request to the Cape Conference for an exchange to be worked out between Miss Sutherland and Derrick Williams, Miss Sutherland to take up Bible work in connection with the Kimberley-Beaconsfield efforts, and Derrick Williams to take up teaching at the Good Hope Training School.¹²⁹

However, there is a twist in the tail. An entry the Cape Conference Executive Committee Minutes reveals the following. The minute, with its preamble, is quoted in full:

Elder Wilson made a statement concerning the conduct of Miss A.V. Sutherland and Mr Derrick Williams¹³⁰ during the time of their connection with the Good Hope Training School. He said that it deeply grieved him to have to outline the history of the case, but the integrity and honour of the work made it necessary. It was stated that over a period of some fifteen months, from December, 1930, to early 1932, immoral relationships were carried on by Miss Sutherland with Mr. Williams at “Riverside”.

The facts in the case were not in dispute for they had been admitted by both parties concerned; by Miss Sutherland to Elders

¹²⁷ Cape Conference Executive Committee Minutes, Actions 280, 281, 282/65/32.

¹²⁸ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. I, 78. SAUC Session Minutes 1933.

¹²⁹ SAUC EXCOM Minutes, Action 587/114/32, 24 May, 1932.

¹³⁰ Derrick Williams was a student for part of the time under discussion, engaging in student teaching as well. Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. I, 77.

Wilson and Billes, and by Mr. Williams to a committee made up of Elders Wilson, Billes, A. E. Nelson and J. I. Robinson.

In view of the very serious nature of the offence committed, and also of the trust we had placed these persons in our Coloured work in the Peninsula, it was

VOTED, That, (a) The credentials of Miss Sutherland and Mr. Williams be withdrawn, and that they be dismissed from service as from this date.

(b) That Miss Sutherland be allowed the sum of Twenty Pounds (£20) in final settlement with her, and that Mr. Williams be allowed the sum of Fifteen Pounds (£15) in final settlement with him.

It is understood that the Cape and Union Conferences shall share equally in this amount of £35.

Deep regret was expressed by all in finding it necessary to take this step, but, in order to protect the honour and purity of our workers all over South Africa, it was clear to every one present that no other step could be taken.¹³¹

For three years she remained outside of the employ of the Church, eventually being readmitted to employment by vote of the SAUC Committee at the end of 1935.¹³² She returned to work for the Cape Field until her retirement in 1952. She died in 1964.¹³³

Her story is remarkable in the context of this study for two reasons:

¹³¹ Cape Conference Executive Committee Minutes CC385/92/33.

¹³² SAUC EXCOM Minutes action #1368/313/35, 26 November, 1935.

¹³³ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. II, 9.

- a. Du Preez and Du Pré, considered by Du Pré to be the authoritative source on Church History amongst the Coloured community in the Church,¹³⁴ make a case for racial discrimination against the Coloured community with reference to Sutherland. In referring to Good Hope Training School and its successors, they indicate that, when the School opened, it had a Coloured principal – Sutherland. However, from 1933 to 1975, the institution was headed by White principals, thus slighting Sutherland and her successive colleagues, directly and the Coloured community, indirectly.

Furthermore, they state that, despite the fact that Sutherland, the “founder of Coloured Seventh-day Adventist education,” made such a marked contribution to the work in the Coloured Church, she has never been honoured by the organization. The events of 1930-1932 might explain why she was never honoured by the organization. What is surprising is the fact that she was re-employed after a relatively short space of three years. History records other employees who have been involved in “immoral relationships” of which no record of their re-employment can be traced.

- b. The second issue revolves around her as a “pioneer” and “founder of Coloured Seventh-day Adventist education” in South Africa. The records indicate that the organized Church in South Africa considered her to be a White person. This is reflected by R. C. L. Thompson who, in discussing the difficult early years at Bethel Mission, states that “. . . Bethel just managed to survive for a few more years with H.G. Patchett and wife,

¹³⁴ Ibid., vol. I, x.

together with Miss A. V. Sutherland constituting the *European faculty*”
(emphasis supplied).¹³⁵

Official minutes and actions taken by the Church support the perception held by R. C. L. Thompson. The salary scales employed by the SAUC and Cape Conference serve as evidence of the disparity present between remuneration for White, Coloured and Black employees. The following salary scales voted by the Church highlight this:

Salaries – Bethel 6 Jan 1926 SAUC EXCOM

E Ladd 27-0-0

A. P. Tarr 22-10-0

A.V. Sutherland 12-0-0



Jan 30 1927 SAUC

Salary rates of those working in Native Department.

Ross Ansley	10.0.0
A.V. Sutherland	12.10.0
Miss Southgate	12.10.0
R.C. Sharman	24.0.0
Mrs Sharman	5.0.0

¹³⁵ Thompson, R. C. L., 111. See SAUC EXCOM Minutes, August 27, 1924.

Compare this to a salary scale voted by the SAUC “Auditing Committee” six years later.¹³⁶

Salaries: “Cape Coloured Field”

L.S. Billes	24.5.0
B.W. Abney	24.0.0
D. C. Theunissen	5.0.0
D. J. May	1.0.0
P. Jackson	4.0.0

Good Hope Training School

R. A. Buckley	20.18.0
Mrs Jackson	4. 0.0
Rudolph Visser	8. 0.0



What is remarkable about the comparison between the two is the fact that D.C. Theunissen was an ordained minister in the “Cape Coloured Field.” The same applied to D. J. May, although it must be pointed out that he was retired by this time. What created the discrepancy? The records consistently show that the difference in salary between the White employees and the Coloured employee was great. Sutherland is listed and paid according to the White salary and Theunissen according to the Coloured salary.

¹³⁶ SAUC 24 April 1933.

The salary audit sheets of 1930 and 1932 are clearly marked as the Audit Sheet for European Workers. A. V. Sutherland is listed amongst the European employees.

Thus when Du Preez and Du Pré cry foul with regard to the principalship being removed from the Coloured people, the Church could not be accused of the deed, as they considered Sutherland to be “White.”

Arising from this, the question needs to be asked as to why the Church did not act more aggressively, then, regarding the “immoral relationship” across the colour line with Mr Williams. Williams is included in “A Century of Good Hope” and referred to by Du Preez and Du Pré as one of the early workers and, later, leading laymen, in the Coloured work.¹³⁷ The answer is simple: the organized Church considered Williams to be “White” as well! He is also listed in the SAUC salary audit amongst the “European” workers.¹³⁸

The irony of the foregoing, especially with regard to Sutherland, must not be overlooked. As stated earlier, a consistent discrepancy between White and Coloured salaries can be seen, illustrated by comparing Sutherland, an unmarried teacher, to Theunissen, a married, ordained minister. The anomaly is that they were brother- and sister-in-law. Theunissen married Kirsten, one of the three Sutherland sisters that attended Union College.¹³⁹ Their parents were Serene Sutherland, an

¹³⁷ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. II, 27-31. He was known to the researcher and the Coloured community in the Western Cape and played a prominent role to well into the late 1990's. He died in 1991.

¹³⁸ SAUC671/129/32 Audit Sheet. “South African Union Conference European Worker’s Salaries and Expenses.” Both Williams and Sutherland are included in the list.

¹³⁹ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. II, 7.

Irish sailor who immigrated to South Africa, and Maryanne Croker, whose parents were from St Helena. Because the St Helenians were considered to be people of mixed heritage, the offspring of Sutherland and Croker would be considered Coloured.

Victoria's other sister, Helen, married Frank du Preez, whose eldest son was Ingram Frank du Preez. Ingram's youngest son is Gerald Theodore du Preez, the researcher. The following diagram traces the abbreviated Sutherland family tree:

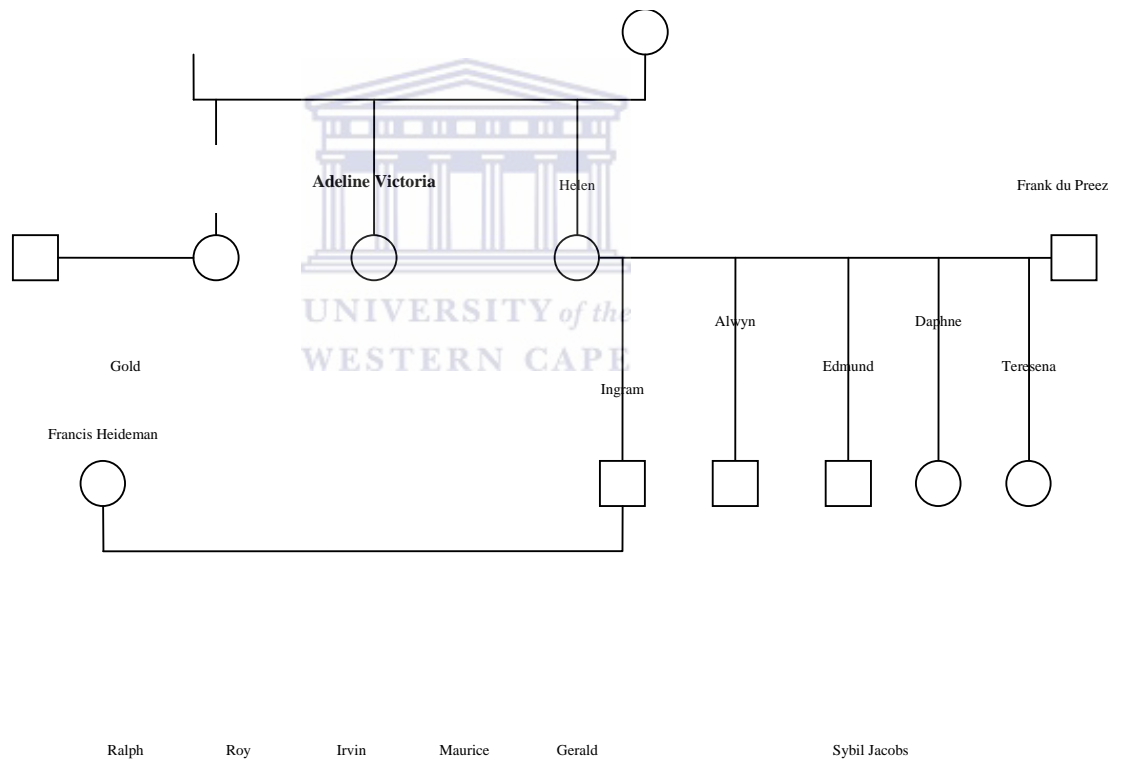


Figure 7

Family Tree of Adeline Victoria Sutherland
 Showing Her Relationship to Daniel Theunissen
 and the Researcher

If foul is to be called, the question could be asked whether Sutherland, who at one time served on the Good Hope Training School Board, was aware of the discrepancy in salaries and was aware of the reason why she was being paid more. If she was aware, then her accepting the “White” status and the benefits that went with it, while her family member and others had to receive the lower salary, would be reason to cry foul.

FURTHER PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE CAPE FIELD

As stated earlier, at the end of 1935 the Cape Conference was reconstituted, with the South African Conference being dissolved and the pre-Depression arrangement continued in the Natal-Transvaal Conference.

The Cape Field continued as a separate Coloured organization, administered by Europeans. At the 17th Session of SAUC held 28th March 1937, the Cape Field delegates were listed as follows: B. W. Abney, D. C. Theunissen, W. J. Arnold, with an additional name which is unclear in the records.¹⁴⁰

By this time L.S. Billes, the first superintendent of Cape Field who had been part of the Cape Conference and placed in charge of the Coloured Department, had been transferred to the Zulu-Sesutu Mission field.¹⁴¹ He was replaced by J. N. de Beer.

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¹⁴⁰ SAUC 17th Session Minutes, 1937, 297.

¹⁴¹ SAUC1444/331/36

¹⁴² 1446/332/36 CC

In the report to the 1937 SAUC session, the new Superintendent, J. N. de Beer, “gave a splendid report of progress.”¹⁴³ He reported that the total number of baptisms during the four years period ending December 1936 had been 246. This represented an increase of 41 over the previous quadrennium which had ended in 1932, while still under the Cape Conference. During the year preceding the Session, seven evangelistic public campaigns had been conducted. These meetings had yielded an increase in membership of 75 persons. The membership total stood at 503 as at the end of 1936. He reported that an estimated 75% of the Church members were regular financial contributors through the tithing system. Echoing the positive preamble to the 1930 action, the Superintendent reported that the Church Departmental work was thriving.¹⁴⁴

His report was followed by that of Elder W.H. Hurlow, the president of the Cape Conference. The report dealt with one year only, it being the first year since the re-organization of the Cape Conference following the dissolution of the South African Conference at the end of 1935. Hurlow reported that the membership at the beginning of 1936 had been 1 117. During the year, 102 had been added by baptism and vote. After deductions owing to death and apostasy, the net increase for the year was 44.

The president continues to report on the interest that members had taken in lay-evangelism and about the reports from different parts of the Conference “of interest having been aroused and people taking their stand for the truth. . . .”¹⁴⁵

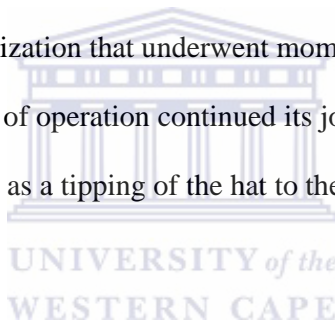
¹⁴³ SAUC 17th Session Minutes, 1937, pp. 309/310.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 310/311

Considering the fact that that at the previous Session held in 1933 in which the Cape Conference had reported on the work in a Conference that still operated with a Coloured Department, the silence from both De Beer and Hurlow with regard to the events since 1933 is deafening. Because of the “Depression”, the Coloured Department had been set up as a separate Field under the SAUC; the Cape Conference had been dissolved and merged with the Natal-Transvaal Conference to form the South African Conference; that Conference was subsequently disbanded at the end of 1935 and the Cape and Natal-Transvaal Conferences reorganized. The Cape (Coloured) Field was left to continue operating under the SAUC.

It is mystifying that an organization that underwent momentous restructuring and reorganization after 30 years of operation continued its journey *sans* the Coloured Department without as much as a tipping of the hat to the past before continuing into the future.

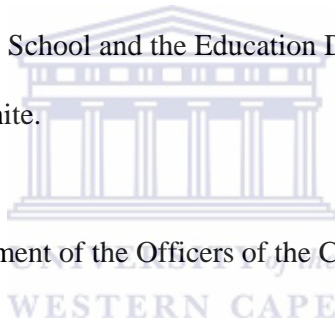


No mention is made by the Union President in his opening remarks or welcome of the presence of a new organizational unit within the SAUC structure. Was the formation of the Cape (Coloured) Field a non-event that did not warrant mention or comment?

Returning to the 1937 Session: Serving on the nominating committee was a lay representative from the Cape Field, W. J. Arnold. In the years prior to the formation of the Field, as has been pointed out previously, the participation of persons of colour in the decision-making processes of the Church had been minimal at most. The norm was for decisions taken without any input from the Coloured Department

at all. An argument could be made that the different individuals who had been appointed to head the Department would always be present to represent the Department. The reality was that the heads were always White. Thus very rarely would a person of colour be present to represent the views and needs of the Department.

This is illustrated by the composition of the SAUC Executive Committee, even after the formation of the Cape Field. The 1937 Session appointed the following persons by position to serve on the Committee: The Union officers, all Conference and Field presidents, the Principals of Helderberg College, Spion Kop Training School, Good Hope Training School and the Education Department Secretary. All of these individuals were White.



When it came to the appointment of the Officers of the Cape Field, the same pattern is seen:

Officers of the Cape Field.

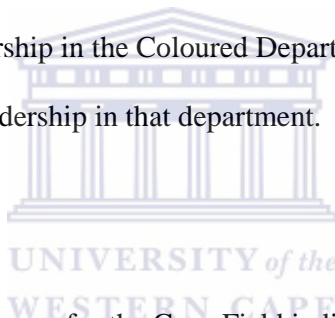
Superintendent:	Elder J. N. de Beer
Sec-treasurer:	J. N. de Beer
Field Missionary Secretary:	Brother J. Grobelaar
Sabbath School Secretary:	Miss Doreen de Beer
Missionary Volunteer and Home Miss. Sec:	Elder J. N. de Beer ¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 319.

All of the Officers and Departmental Secretaries chosen were White. The 1930 preamble to the action taken to separate the Coloured Department from the Cape Conference indicates that

our Coloured believers have made the most marked progress in their own experience, and in Sabbath School, Missionary Volunteer and general Church activities, developing strong leaders and efficient Church officers. . . .¹⁴⁷

If this was indeed the case, why do we find the officers chosen in 1937, four years after the formation of the Cape (Coloured) Field, that there is not one “strong leader” capable of serving as an officer? The preamble does not call for separation in order to *develop* the leadership in the Coloured Department; it calls for separation *because* of the leadership in that department. This is not borne out by the action taken in 1937.



The Executive Committee chosen for the Cape Field indicates a move away from the Whites-only pattern shown in the appointment of the SAUC executive committee and the Cape Field officers.

Executive Committee:

Elder J. N. de Beer

Brother P. H. Mantell

Elder B. W. Abney

Brother W. J. Arnold

¹⁴⁷ CC594/165/30

Brother P. Jackson.¹⁴⁸

De Beer and Mantell were European. Abney was a non-South African. Arnold was a Coloured Layman and Jackson a Coloured minister. While it is laudable that there was representation from amongst the Coloured Community, the majority of the committee was tilted towards those not directly from the Field membership. The question can once again be posed as to how a minority of the Committee members were taken from

our Coloured believers [who] have made the most marked progress in their own experience, and in Sabbath School, Missionary Volunteer and general Church activities, developing strong leaders and efficient Church officers. . . .¹⁴⁹

From amongst the 503 members, were there no additional members that could be found who had “made the most marked progress in their own experience” who could serve on the Committee? Or was their “progress” not sufficient to either serve as an officer or on the Committee?

Five years later, at the 18th Session of the SAUC, held 12th April, 1942, the delegates from the Cape Field show a drastic change in number from that of 1942.

The delegates as listed were:

Delegates at large: J. N. de Beer, K. Landers, S. J. Fourie, P. Jackson.

Regular Delegates: Mrs J. N. de Beer, Mrs J. Bailey, E. Heideman, Miss A.V. Sutherland, M. Isaacs, Mrs Douglas, Mrs E.

¹⁴⁸SAUC 17th Session Minutes, 1937, p 319

¹⁴⁹CC594/165/30.

Solomons, Mrs D. C. Theunissen, D. la Kay, Mrs K
Landers, J. J. Parkerson, G. Theunissen,
_____(E.G.?) Langford, Mrs N. Nolan, D. C.
Theunissen, _____Rayners.¹⁵⁰

Serving on the Nominating Committee, the Cape Field had two representatives, S. J. Fourie and P. Jackson. However, even though the Field had more delegates and the number of representatives on the Nominating Committee had increased 100 fold (from 1 to 2!); the racial composition of the Officers of the Field as appointed by the Nominating Committee did not change.



The officers of Cape Field as appointed by the Nominating Committee were:

Officers of the Cape Field

Superintendent:	C. W. Curtis
Home Missionary & Missionary Volunteer	C. W. Curtis
Secretary Treasurer	L. H. Clack

When it came to the Executive Committee of the Cape Field, it is encouraging to note that, nine years after the formation of the Field, there was a move to make the Committee more representative of the constituency of the Field.

Cape Field Executive Committee

C. W. Curtis Chairman

¹⁵⁰ SAUC 18th Session Minutes, 12 April 1942.

L. H. Clack Secretary

S. J. Fourie

Principal, Good Hope Training School

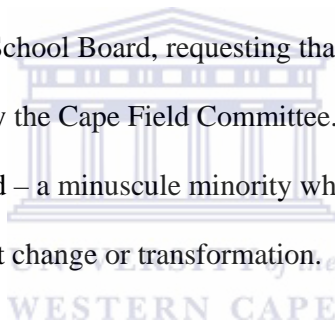
N. C. Stuart

A. Felix

K. Landers

However, the balance of power was retained by persons not from the Cape Field constituency, with the minority emanating from the Field.

The SAUC Session mandated the Cape Field Committee to add to the membership of the Good Hope Training School Board, requesting that “. . . two coloured members . . . be appointed by the Cape Field Committee.” Two out of seven members were now Coloured – a minuscule minority who would have found it difficult to initiate significant change or transformation.



In the report given to the 18th Session on Good Hope Training School, as at the end of 1941, W. H. Hayter, the principal, reported as follows:

Full time teachers	5
Part-time teacher	1
Average enrolment	93.3
Average Attendance	88.7
High school and training	8
Graduates	6

He further indicated that

The greatest need at the present time is the completion of the school building. This will provide adequate classroom space and will bring the entire school under the same roof. Requests have already been passed on in connection with the class-room and hostel needs, and it is hoped that ways and means will be provided in the near future to enable the Good Hope Training School to realise to the fullest the expectation inherent in her very name.

Up to this time, the only building that had been erected on the campus was a house for the principal in 1934. Now, almost eight years later, the institution still did not have a school building with “adequate classroom space” for the 93.3 students.

Contrasted with its sister institution, Helderberg College, located some 40 kilometres away whose development since its establishment, only one year before Good Hope Training School, was described as follows:

The capital outlay at Helderberg College resulted in a building spree on the campus during the twenties unequalled by any previous period. As a final act in an era of expansion of training institutions, Helderberg College took its place among the institutions as the greatest accomplishment of this era.¹⁵¹

However, the same author, in discussing the institution described by the SAUC as the “training school for the Cape Coloured people at the Cape”¹⁵² points out that

The Great Depression also retarded progress and development among the Coloured members. Good Hope Training School established on the eve of the depression [1929], did not receive much attention until 1934 when the first permanent building, a house

¹⁵¹ Thompson, R. C. L., 159.

¹⁵² SAUC EXCOM Minutes, Dec 5, 1928

for the Principal, was erected. The first three class-rooms in a solid brick building were built three years later.¹⁵³

It is apparent that the “three class-rooms in a solid brick building” was inadequate to provide for the needs of the school, as indicated in the report presented by Hayter.

The 19th SAUC Session held five years later saw the introduction of Black members on to the Nominating Committee. Along with K. Landers from the Cape Field, E. J Kuboni and S. K Ntwana from the two Black Fields served on the Committee.

Coming fourteen years after the formation of the Cape (Coloured) Field, this Committee still appoints an officer corps consisting only of European members. Assuming that persons of colour did not possess the experience or capability in 1933 when the Field was formed, are we also to assume that after fourteen years, no persons of colour were trained or exposed to the needs and requirements of the Field to the extent where they could assume office? The 1930 preamble cites the development of strong leadership amongst the members of the Coloured Department as motivation for the separation. It is thus difficult to accept that the absence of Coloured representation amongst the appointed officers reflected on the competence, skill, experience or ability of the Coloured constituency. One explanation could be that the White membership and leadership was not ready or prepared to have a Coloured in leadership where such leader would be placed in a position considered to be “superior” to that of a White person. Would the SAUC

¹⁵³ Thompson, R. C. L., 167.

have been able to tolerate a White minister, for instance, in the Cape Field having a Coloured Superintendent directing his activities? Could a Coloured treasurer have administered the salary of a White employee?

While no minute or record was found that indicates a policy stand on Coloureds holding positions of responsibility in which Whites would have been “subservient”, the thinking and attitude of the Church towards non-Europeans is reflected in the following issues:

(a) R. C. L. Thompson comments on the fact that “[t]he powers of the African ministry were defined by an article in the constitution [of the Union Missions].” Black ministers who had been ordained were authorised to “baptize with the approval of the Mission Field executive committee.”¹⁵⁴ Within the local church they could administer the ordinances of the Church such as Holy Communion and Foot-Washing. This was normal practice for an ordained minister. However, the constitution placed a limitation on their jurisdiction, even in the church where he had been appointed to serve as the local pastor by the Field Executive Committee. “[I]n no case to take precedence over a European church elder [who would be a lay person], even if he was not ordained to the ministry.”¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ Thompson, R. C. L., 32.

¹⁵⁵ SAUC Constitution, Article 12, Section 9, Revised January 1921. This particular clause was removed in 1926. The ordained Black minister still had to seek permission from the superintendent of the mission director to administer marriage and the ordinances of the church. In 1927 the constitution grants permission, without the clause requiring approval of the superintendent, for the Black ministers to administer the ordinances of the church “to their own people.”

(b) In 1929 the SAUC Executive Committee opened the door for two “Native Workers” to be placed on the Field Executive Committees. However, their membership on the Committee would be a qualified membership. The action reads as follows:

That these Native Committee members sit with their respective committees at all times when items as effect only the Native work or workers are under consideration. *Such items as effect only the European workers shall be handled by the European members of the Committee* (emphasis supplied).¹⁵⁶

(c) The same SAUC Committee referred to the phasing in of Native workers as mission station directors. The motivation given for this, however, was not to grant these workers the opportunity of serving as leaders in the Fields, but this step would “thus reliev[e] the European workers on these stations for more responsible posts.”¹⁵⁷

(d) In 1930 the Union approved “that as a general principle, we recognise that our native workers be permitted to travel 2nd class on the South African Railways.”¹⁵⁸ This was a case of “upward mobility” compared to an action taken the year before by the Division with regard to the travel arrangements made for Theunissen and Malinki who would be travelling by ship to the United States to attend the General Conference Session. In that action it was decided to book James Malinki third class and that he leave with

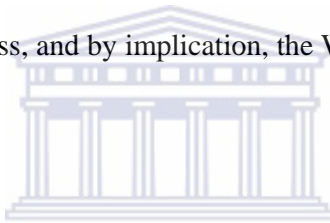
¹⁵⁶ SAUC1264/279/29

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ SAUC206/41/30

“Brother Theunissen.”¹⁵⁹ Upon his return, he was to travel on the same boat with “Elder Dick.” A distinction is made in the minute, however, to ensure that the reader understands that James Malinki would be booked to travel third class.¹⁶⁰

Two issues arise from this seemingly innocuous series of actions: (i) The Black worker, an ordained minister, is referred to by name, with no title – James Malinki; the Coloured worker, an ordained minister, is referred to as Brother Theunissen; the White worker, an ordained minister, is referred to as Elder Dick. (ii) the context conveys that the Non-White employees would be travelling third class, and by implication, the White worker would travel 2nd or 1st class.



The second issue – that the Non-Whites travel 3rd class – finds an echo in an action taken to discourage workers from requesting to travel third class when going on furlough. What was apparently happening was that the workers were claiming and receiving the fare for a 2nd or 1st class trip, but buying a third class passage and then using “the difference for other incidental expense in connection with their trips”¹⁶¹ While one of the concerns was possibly the dubious usage of the funds, a concern was also being expressed that the workers going on furlough – the majority of whom were White – would be travelling 3rd class.

¹⁵⁹ AD243/582/29

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 390/623/30

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 258/592/30

(e) On 24 October 1923, the South African Division Committee, which was based in Cape Town, discussed the position of some of the Native workers who were called from the then Rhodesia to work in other parts of the Division territory. The regular practice was that workers under similar circumstances would be granted furlough and given assistance to travel to and from their homes for extended periods on a regular basis as determined by respective committees.

Why this particular discussion is noteworthy is because of the wording employed in the minute. It reads as follows:

The chair stated that some of the native boys in Rhodesia had asked for consideration on the question of their being granted furlough when called from their homeland to take up work in some strange field¹⁶²

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A cursory reading of the minute might lead one to conclude that reference was possibly being made to agricultural or domestic staff, hence the usage of the term “boy.”¹⁶³ However, as the minute progresses, it describes these “boys” as “our native workers [who are required] to leave their home field and help in building up the work in new territory”¹⁶⁴ It was finally voted that “we favour the plan to grant furloughs to native workers who are sent far from their homes to strange fields. . . .”

¹⁶² African Division EXCOM Minutes, 24 October, 1923.

¹⁶³ Even if it were referring to agricultural or domestic workers, the Church recognized that these are “customs and practices of a past era that give offence today.”

¹⁶⁴ AD 24 October 1923.

(f) In 1926, the African Division Committee prepared a response to a book by a Dr Richer entitled “The History of the Evangelical Missions in Africa” in which Seventh-day Adventists are mentioned in regard to troubles involving the Natives in 1915. In the response this statement appears: “We believe that the chief occupation of the native peoples, at least in their present state of advancement, should be with the soil.”¹⁶⁵

The chapter has examined the development of the Church amongst the Coloured community in South Africa. It demonstrated that during the initial years no separate church or organization was present for the different race groups.

As the Church grew and became established, with the formation of the Conferences and the Division, the system of racial division was introduced to where it was formalized by 1933 with the formation of the Cape Field. The next chapter will look at the transition from the Cape Field to the Good Hope Conference.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 6 December 1926.

CHAPTER FOUR

FROM CAPE FIELD TO GOOD HOPE CONFERENCE:

A MATTER OF “PRINCIPLE”

This chapter will further examine the factors which gave rise to the establishment of the Cape Field and its successor, the Good Hope Conference. Particular attention will be paid to the “principle” upon which the separation was based as manifest in the Cape Field and perpetuated in the Good Hope Conference and its successor, the Southern Hope Conference. It will test the “principle” against the definition of the word “principle”, Seventh-day Adventist Church teaching and practice, and counsel from E. G. White. Further, it will examine the “principle” in the context of American and South African socio-political influences. In addition, it will give attention to the developments which lead to the establishment of the Good Hope Conference.

In chapter three the circumstances leading up to the formation of the Cape Field in 1933 was examined. R. C. L. Thompson refers to that period as the “progress towards a self-governing Coloured church.”¹ In discussing the establishment of the Good Hope Training School in 1930 [sic]², he states that “during that year the South African Union Conference led by N.C. Wilson approved the principle of separate churches for Coloured members throughout South Africa”³

¹ Thompson, R. C. L., 261

² As discussed on page 171 Good Hope Training School was established in 1929.

³ Thompson, R. C. L., 261.

The issue surrounding the reason behind the formation of a separate organization to administer the Coloured work in South Africa was discussed in the previous chapter from the perspective of examining the reasons furnished in the minutes passed by both the Cape Conference and the Southern African Union Conference. However, as referred to by R. C. L. Thompson, the preamble to the action for the setting up of a separate organization refers to the “principle” upon which the decision was to be taken.⁴

It would be laudable and defensible if the reason behind the split was based on a principle. It would mean that the separation was predicated upon “a fundamental truth or law as the basis of reasoning or action.”⁵ It would indicate that the separation of the races involved “an important underlying law or assumption required in a system of thought.”⁶ Another way of viewing it would be a “particular ethical standard that someone believes in.”⁷

Approaching the separation from a “principle” would assume that the decision was based on “a standard of moral or ethical decision-making.”⁸ However, ethics and morality would presume consultation with and consideration of the thinking of those individuals who would be directly impacted upon by the decision.

Thus the questions need to be posed:

1. Was this the will or choice of the “Coloured members?”

⁴ SAUC EXCOM Minutes, Action # 259/52/30, taken on 8 September 1930.

⁵ The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 8th Edition, 1990.

⁶ Encarta Dictionary: English (U.K.), online 21 September, 2009.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

2. In 1923 when their names were first separated from the membership list in the books of the Secretary of the Cape Conference⁹, were they consulted?
3. When the action was taken to separate the Wynberg membership so as to cease the practice of White and Coloured members worshipping together, was it as a result of a consultative process involving all the parties involved?
4. When the Kimberley church, the first Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa, was split¹⁰, was it after consultation with, and agreement by, all parties affected?
5. When the George church was split and the Coloured section formed as the Elim church¹¹ and “advise[d] . . . to find a suitable hall for the services”¹², leading them to move from one venue to the other – school rooms, members houses, community halls, a disused Congregational church which had already be declared a national monument – until they were finally able to build their own church in Pacaltsdorp in 1986, fifty-five years later¹³, with only two Coloured persons present at the Executive Committee where the decision was taken¹⁴ – were the members consulted.

The minutes and documents available do not give evidence of consultation having taken place. Thus the “principled” position must be queried.

⁹ See page 29.

¹⁰ Thompson, R. C. L., 374

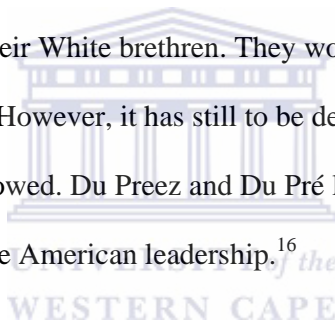
¹¹ Cape Conference Minutes August 23, 1931, Minute #169/36/31

¹² Ibid.

¹³ The Elim Church commenced construction in 1985 and was opened in 1986 during the time when the researcher was serving as the pastor of the Elim congregation.

¹⁴ D C Theunissen and D J May were present according to the list of attendees as contained in the minutes of the Cape Conference of 23 August, 1931.

The perception and recollection of senior surviving members and retired employees of the Coloured Church indicate that the process of moving towards a “self-governing Coloured Church” was not a result of negotiation or a response to a request from the Coloured membership, but an arbitrary decision taken by “the brethren” – referring to the White leadership of the Church. A common theme which has surfaced consistently is the report with regard to the Roeland Street Church that was formed in Cape Town on the 2nd of March 1889. The second church to be organized after the Beaconsfield church in Kimberley, it was, like the Kimberley church, a mixed church. The report given is that “One Sabbath morning the pastor walked into the church and informed the Coloureds that they would no longer be worshipping with their White brethren. They would have to start worshipping on their own.”¹⁵ However, it has still to be demonstrated that this a fair reflection of the process followed. Du Preez and Du Pré lay the blame on the split of the Wynberg church on the American leadership.¹⁶



Apart from the issue as to whether the Coloured membership was consulted, the question needs to be raised as to what was the “principle” that N.C. Wilson approved which would give rise to separate churches for the Coloured people throughout South Africa?¹⁷ R. C. L. Thompson states that the reason for the separation was due to the leadership demonstrated by its church officers.¹⁸

¹⁵ Interviews with: D Koopman, retired educational employee; J Human, retired pastoral and administrative employee; B H Parkerson, retired educational, pastoral and administrative employee, I M Petersen, retired educational and administrative employee. Mrs Petersen puts the date down at around 1912 based on a report given to her by her mother and grandmother who were part of the Roeland Street congregation. She also recalls that, according to reports, the displaced members formed the nucleus of the Salt River congregation. While this report has surfaced, no records could be found to support this account.

¹⁶ Du Preez and Du Pré, vol. I, 4.

¹⁷ Thompson, R. C. L., 261.

¹⁸ Ibid.

This is supported by the action taken by the South African Union Conference and the Cape Conference to establish a separate Church administrative entity to manage the Coloured Church in South Africa. As discussed in the previous chapter, reference is made to the advances that had been made in the growth of the Church, specifically in the various departments of the Church. The Coloured members are encouraged to foster the work amongst their congregations in order to facilitate progress and growth “to the highest pinnacle of efficiency.”¹⁹ However, what was the “principle”²⁰ that was approved?

If the “principle” was that a separate structure should be set up due to the “encouraging” growth and the “bright” prospects coupled to the development of strong leaders and efficient Church officers, you would expect this to be seen in the new structure that is implemented to cater for the administration and development of the Coloured Church. As was seen in chapter three, by 1942 the leadership of the Cape Field was still under the direction of the White membership.

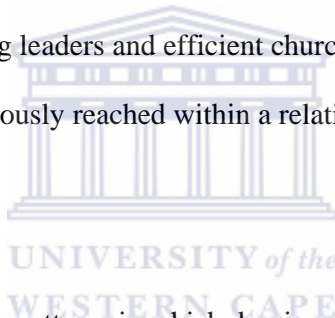
By 1954, the situation with regard to leadership had not changed. The minutes of the 18th Session of the Cape Field held 14th April 1954 reflect the officers and departmental leaders of the Cape Field unchanged in terms of racial composition. It is difficult to reconcile the motivation in 1930 with the status quo which persisted through the succeeding twenty-four years. Those who had been the senior leadership amongst the Coloured community, if they had been in their mid-thirties in 1930, would now be retired or close to retirement by 1954. It is only in 1957 that the election of officers show A. D. Jephthas (Assistant Secretary), M. Z. Cornelius

¹⁹ SAUC259/52/30. Also CC594/165/30.

²⁰ Ibid.

(Publishing Secretary) and A. R. Grove (Home Missionary Secretary) as the first Coloured members entrusted with leadership.

Going back to the chronology of separation: in 1923 the names of the Coloured Churches are separated in the Cape Conference Secretary's books; seven years later the Cape Conference and the SAUC report "encouraging growth" and that "marked progress has been made". Yet it is twenty-seven years following the 1930 action that the first Coloureds are placed in leadership in an organization that had been established on the "principle of separate churches for our Coloured members." Did separation result in retrogression that it took 27 years to return to the 1930 situation of the development of "strong leaders and efficient church officers" – a position the Coloured believers had previously reached within a relatively short space of 7 years?



An examination of leadership patterns in which dominance was exercised by White leadership over Coloured members over an extended period of time gives rise to the assertion that "separateness" or *Apartheid* was the principle being exercised. The difference in salaries supports this theory. Du Preez and du Pré assert that "the Adventist church was always far ahead of the government of the day in applying racial segregation in the church."²¹ However, for this theory to be tested, other possible factors need to be examined in order to come to a conclusion as to what the "principle" was referred to by N.C. Wilson.

²¹ Du Preez and du Pré, vol. II, 116.

E.G. White and Race Issues

As discussed in chapter one, Ellen White plays a unique role within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Given this role and the position her writings occupy within the Church, her views with regard to race issues will be examined in order to determine whether her writings influenced the Church in 1930 in developing the “principle” for setting up a separate work for the Coloured members of the South Africa.

Ellen White was a person of her time. She did not develop in a vacuum.²² The city of her childhood, Portland, Maine, would have exposed her to the challenges of race relations. It had a fairly progressive public school system.²³ However, it was a segregated system with the sizeable Black population having only a single, segregated primary school to provide for their educational needs.²⁴

The State of Maine never practiced slavery. However, Portland was exposed to the issue through numerous newspaper articles and public presentations by those for and against the practice. Strangely enough, while the State and the city were anti-slavery, it did not proactively support the abolitionists. Not even the churches became involved in the abolitionist controversy.²⁵

As the Advent movement matured and gave rise to the development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, a parallel political system was developing that systematically eroded the rights of the Black population of America even during the

²² Land, *The World of Ellen White*, 10.

²³ *Ibid.*, 16

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 21.

postbellum era. By 1890 the Supreme Court ruled that there could be separation on public carriers, followed six years later by the Jim Crow laws that would pave the way for all kinds of segregation with its “separate but equal” doctrine.²⁶ By 1910 segregation in federal buildings had become mandated in Washington and the concept of separation had become part of the national consciousness.²⁷ Knight states that much of the prejudice against Blacks was based on Social Darwinism which placed Whites on the top of the evolutionary scale with Blacks being at the bottom.²⁸

This view was rejected by Ellen White. Any differences between Blacks and Whites she saw as the result of the lack of opportunities afforded Blacks because of slavery and other forms of discrimination. She stated that “many” amongst the slaves “had intellectual capabilities far superior to those of the masters who claimed them as their property.”²⁹ In *The Southern Work* she argued that every wrong that had been done against them should be wiped out.³⁰

In talking of the neglect of the Church to work for the Blacks in the Southern States, she speaks of those who pandered to the “prejudice of the white people; and a wall of separation in religious worship has been built up between the colored people and the white people.” She continues by deploring the willingness of Whites to have the former slaves converted, but who then were not being willing to sit

²⁶ Knight, *Ellen White's World*, 119. See also Land, *The World of Ellen White*, 56.

²⁷ Ibid.

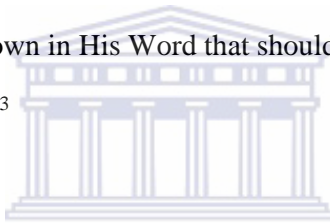
²⁸ Ibid. Kliebard, H.M. *The Struggle for the American Curriculum, 1893 – 1958*, 21.

²⁹ White, *The Southern Work*, 54.

³⁰ Ibid., 15.

“side by side” with them and sing and pray and “bear witness to the truth which they had in common.”³¹

In correspondence between Phillip Wessels, brother to Pieter Wessels, and Ellen White, the issue of race is raised by Phillip. This matter is discussed in greater detail on pages 219-220. Pertinent to this section is Ellen White’s reply to Wessels in a letter dated 17 March 1893. She responds to his particularly strong views on the colour question thus: “You speak of the color line: bear in mind there is no color or caste or distinction with God.”³² Two years earlier, in her letter to the leadership of the General Conference on the issue of the “color line” she states that “[t]here are principles laid down in His Word that should guide us in dealing with these perplexing questions.”³³



These principles are laid in *The Southern Work* as follows:

1. The colour of the skin does not determine character (11, 31)
2. God loves all His creatures and makes no difference between White and black; the name of the black man is written next to the White man’s in the Lamb’s Book of Life. “No human mind should seek to draw the line between the colored and the white people.” “We have no time to build up walls of distinction between the white and black race There is to be no special heaven for the white man and another for the black man.” (12, 22, 55)
3. Those who slight a brother of colour are slighting Christ; if a Coloured brother sits next to a White brother, he would not be offended, despite

³¹ Ibid., 20-21.

³² Correspondence from Document File 506, E. G. White Research Centre archives.

³³ White, *The Southern Work*, 9.

hereditary or cultivated prejudices – if the love of Jesus fills his heart.

“Those who are converted among the white people will experience a change in their sentiments. The prejudice which they have inherited and cultivated toward the colored race will die away.” (13, 14, 22, 43)

4. There should be no separation in places of worship. Persons of colour “are to hold membership in the church with the white brethren.” (15, 19, 20)
5. Caste and rank are not recognized by God. (21)

God estimates man not by the circumstances of his birth, not by his position or wealth, not by his advantages in educational lines, but by the price paid for his redemption. . . . Whatever the nationality or color, whatever may be the social condition, the missionary for God will . . . understand that there is no caste with God. (31)

6. Do not stir up unnecessary prejudice and opposition from those who are not yet converted. (48, 68, 75, 95)

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A compilation of material addressed to missionaries and other denominational workers as well as individuals in Africa compiled by the E.G. White estate in 1974, entitled *Testimonies to Southern Africa*, gives further insight on Mrs White’s views with regard to the issue of race. Writing from Sidney on June 18, 1900 in a general letter to Church workers in Africa, she states that “[r]ace is nothing in the sight of God.”³⁴ She continues by elevating the more important principles in the Christian life such as “Christian experience and sanctification through the truth.”³⁵

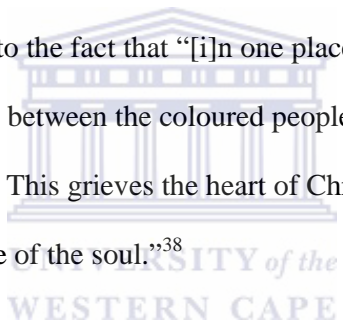
³⁴ E.G. White, *Testimonies to Southern Africa*, 92.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

In an earlier letter to a specific missionary, she raises the question of “caste and colour” immediately after the salutation and introductory paragraph. She states categorically that “nothing would be gained by making a decided distinction, but the Spirit of God would be grieved.”³⁶ In a pastoral tone she continues:

When the love of Christ is cherished in the heart as it should be, when the sweet, subduing spirit of the love of God fills the soul-temple, there will be no cast, no pride of nationality; no difference will be made because of the colour of the skin.³⁷

Ellen White makes it abundantly clear to those with whom she corresponded in Southern Africa that the issue of race and divisions because of colour have no place in God’s Church. She refers to the fact that “[i]n one place the proposition was made that a curtain be drawn between the coloured people and the white people. I asked, Would Jesus do that? This grieves the heart of Christ. The colour of the skin is not criterion as to the value of the soul.”³⁸



The American Civil and Church Milieu

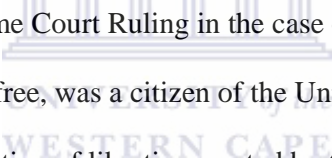
The early missionaries and leadership of the Church originated from the United States of America. It would be reasonable to assume that the American civil and Church milieu would have an impact upon their thinking with regard to race relations and that their views would be brought to bear upon the development of the work in South Africa. As noted in the previous section, by the turn of the century the distinction between Whites and Blacks had found its way into the thinking of most Americans.

³⁶ Ibid., 85

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., 85, 86.

Millions of slaves were imported to the Southern States of America where they worked on cotton, sugar and tobacco plantations. They were, as a rule, brutally treated. Their status in the minds of their owners was that of 'property' in the same sense as a wagon, plough or a horse was property. In 1808, a year after the British banned further importation of slaves to South Africa, slaves were no longer allowed to be brought into America officially. It was not, however, until 1865 – thirty years after the abolition of slavery in South Africa – that slavery was abolished in America; and that after a bitter civil war that killed close to 700 000 persons.³⁹ It was a huge toll on the American population. It has been estimated that more Americans died in the Civil war than in the 1st and 2nd World Wars, the Korean War and the Vietnam War combined.⁴⁰



In 1857 the American Supreme Court Ruling in the case of *Dred Scott vs Sanford* ruled that no Black, slave or free, was a citizen of the United States, “and therefore was not entitled to any protection of liberties granted by the constitution.”⁴¹ In addition, the Supreme Court ruled that Congress could not rule on slavery, as ‘property’ was protected under the constitution.⁴²

With regard to the indigenous inhabitants of America, the White European settlers considered them as a commodity to dispense with. Successive movies issued by the American film industry portrayed the indigenous Americans as bloodthirsty

³⁹ www.civilwarhome.com/casualties.htm [September, 2009]

⁴⁰ Ibid. See also U. S. Army Military History Institute: iCasualties.org [September, 2009].

⁴¹ Allen, 152.

⁴² Ibid.

savages intent on killing the Whites and stealing their property.⁴³ History tells a different story.

In 1867, the same year that diamonds were discovered in Kimberley and ten years before the arrival of the first Adventist missionaries in South Africa, Comanche Chief Ten Bears appealed on behalf of his people against the forced resettlement and land theft which had been systematically carried out by the European invaders. His appeal, as with others, fell on deaf ears. Ten years later, the General Allotment Act passed through Congress. This Act “called for a one-time and irreversible division of American Indian territory.”⁴⁴ It is estimated that the resettlement of Native Americans into reserves (Bantustans?) stripped the indigenous inhabitants of one hundred million acres of land with an incalculable value in gold, diamonds, oil and agricultural land.⁴⁵ As with the San and the Khoikhoi in South Africa, the White invaders in America had succeeded in subduing, subjugating and virtually obliterating the indigenous population under the guise of a superior nation destined by God to “go up and possess the land.”

Long after the abolition of slavery, America was still struggling with the issue of rights for non-settlers; Martin Luther King, the Black American Civil Rights leader was assassinated in April, 1968 – more than one hundred years after the emancipation of the slaves.

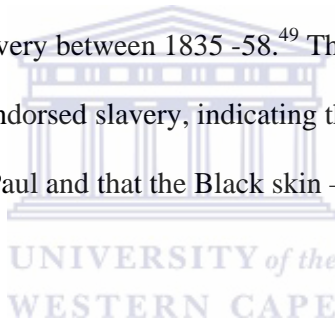
⁴³ Ibid., 157

⁴⁴ Ibid., 148.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

The first missionaries were American. The first African Division President was from America.⁴⁶ N. C. Wilson, South African Union President at the time of the 1930 “principle” being stated was American.⁴⁷ Like Ellen White, they did not develop in a vacuum. Their thinking would have been shaped by the society from which they came. That society, a hundred years prior to the separation of the Cape Conference, had a belief that Blacks were subhuman, or, at best, inferior human beings.⁴⁸ At the most, they were ‘property.’

Even the churches in the USA became embroiled in the issue of race, with the Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist churches splitting into Southern and Northern sections over the issue of slavery between 1835 -58.⁴⁹ Thomas Stringfellow, a clergyman and theologian, endorsed slavery, indicating that it enjoyed biblical sanction, was supported by Paul and that the Black skin – the mark of Cain – justified slavery.⁵⁰



The Adventist Church entered the arena of missionary work amongst the Blacks at a fairly advanced stage of their development in America. James Edson White, Ellen and James’ second eldest son born in 1949, had a conversion experience in 1893 which lead him to decide to commence a programme of evangelization of the former slaves in the Southern States of America.⁵¹ With the work of the Church up to that time confined largely to the migrating westward from the original bases in

⁴⁶ W. H. Branson (1887 – 1961) became African Division President in 1920.

⁴⁷ N. C. Wilson, born in Eureka, California, 1897, was a graduate of Pacific Union College, Angwin, California, USA. He served as Union President between 1925 and 1934.

⁴⁸ Land, *The World of Ellen White*, 48

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Knight, *Walking with Ellen White*, 88.

New England and New York,⁵² the foray into the South in a substantial manner in the 1890's was to shape the approach and attitude of the Church to work amongst the Blacks in America.

The initial work carried out in the South in the 70's met with much prejudice. Adventist ministers were puzzled as to how to relate to the racial attitudes of the Southerners.⁵³ However, with the severe prejudice still present in the pro-slavery south – even though anti-slavery laws had been passed in 1869/70 – the first Adventist minister to the South, E. B. Lane, bowed to the pressure of the community by preaching from a doorway of two adjoining waiting rooms of a railway stations. One room was for Whites, the other for Blacks.⁵⁴ When the issue of relating to race was debated at the General Conference in 1877 and 1885, the Church developed a pragmatic stance under the persuasion of R. M. Kilgore and D. M. Canright of moving towards segregated audiences so as not to offend the White population and thus jeopardize the prospects of being able to evangelize that community.⁵⁵ However, this was done at the expense of the Black population that had to be exposed to a Church that was willing to sacrifice principle in order to support political expediency. Such was the attitude developing in the Church leading up to the time that missionaries were sent to Africa in 1887.

⁵²Schwarz and Greenleaf, 225.

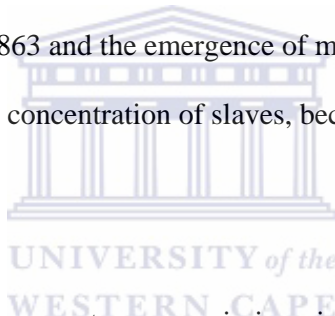
⁵³ Ibid., 226.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

In 1891 Ellen White spoke out against the decisions taken by the General Conference in 1877 and 1885, stating that “the color of the skin does not determine character in the heavenly courts.”⁵⁶

Repeating the “vacuum” principle; those missionaries sent from the United States of America did not develop in a vacuum. The attitudes and arguments engaged in by the Church towards the work amongst the Blacks in the southern states of America would have no doubt had an influence on their thinking. While the initial establishment of the Church in America centred in the north-eastern states, it expanded as settler migration moved westward. Only later, after the official formation of the Church in 1863 and the emergence of missiological thinking in the ’70’s, that the South, with its concentration of slaves, became a factor in the thinking of the Church.



In commenting on those persons sent over as missionaries to work in Africa, Ellen White indicated that not all of those who came were of benefit to the work in this country. She further indicates that of those who came were not able to understand or fit into the particular situation in this country. While she does not specifically refer in this statement to the race issue in South Africa, it would be reasonable to include the challenges facing the Church with regard to Black/White relationships under the umbrella of “the situation” in South Africa. Writing to workers in South Africa she said:

It is a sad fact that not all the men who have come from America as workers have been a help and blessing in South Africa. . . . This has

⁵⁶ White, *The Southern Work*, 11.

cost South Africa much.⁵⁷ Some of the workers . . . [from America] have been hindrances and not helps⁵⁸. . . [M]any of the workers sent to Africa were not sanctified. They were unable to take in the situation.⁵⁹

However, the stance of the Church on the work in the South amongst the Blacks was clear. While Mrs White counselled that there might be expediency in approaching the work with consideration towards the minds of those who were prejudiced against Blacks,⁶⁰ this was to be a temporary situation due to the unsanctified thinking of those for whom they were to labour and in the interest of not jeopardizing the lives of those who sought to labour for the Black population without prejudice or discrimination.⁶¹ It was not to be a pattern for the work as a principle and was not a reflection of the position of the Church.

The principle she espoused was the equality of all regardless of race, caste, nationality, language or creed. Anything else was a denial of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. She poses the question to a missionary in Africa in 1900: “Ask yourself if Christ would make any difference. . . .Would He say, Those who are dark-skinned may file into the back seats; those of lighter skin may come up to the front seats.”⁶² She thus emphasises the un-Christlike nature of distinctions being made because of race or colour.

⁵⁷ Ellen White, *Testimonies to Southern Africa*, 79.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁶⁰ White, *The Southern Work*, 95.

⁶¹ Schwarz and Greenleaf, 234

⁶² White, *Testimonies to Southern Africa*, 85.

South African Socio-Political Milieu

Could the “principle” be linked to the South African socio-political milieu of the time? By the time N. C. Wilson approved the “principle” of a separate Coloured Church the Dutch Reformed church had split to form the Dutch Reformed Mission Church – a Coloured Church.⁶³ More than 100 years had elapsed since the first legislation was introduced that would pave the way for a plethora of laws to be unleashed upon the Non-White citizens and inhabitants of South Africa.⁶⁴ These laws would impact upon every aspect of their lives – literally from the cradle to the grave. A climate had been created in South Africa which entrenched the belief of the superiority of White over Black. History was being steered into accepting that the White man had arrived in a vacant Southern Africa – the ‘empty land’ myth –⁶⁵ while archaeological and historical works have in more recent years shown that South Africa was an inhabited land with the pastoralist revolution having taken place between 2000 and 3000 years ago.⁶⁶ Evidence is present of crop and sheep farming, accompanied by mining in copper and iron between AD 300 and 1000.⁶⁷ Welsh refers to Van Riebeeck and “his mixed European community” as “late arrivals on the continent, intruders into established societies”⁶⁸

The subjection of the Black population by the minority White population was becoming entrenched to the extent that the Cape Governor, Sir John Cradock, could report to his superiors in Britain in 1812 that “there has not been shed more Kafir

⁶³ 1881 in the Cape and 1910 in the Free State. Loff, 124, 125.

⁶⁴ 1812 – Indenture of Khoikhoi children on settlers farms; 1828 -- Ordinance 49 imposes pass controls on African workers in Cape Colony

⁶⁵ Worden, 6.

⁶⁶ Isichei, 101.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁶⁸ Welsh, 21. L. Thompson entitles the chapter on the commencement of colonization as “The White Invasion: The Cape Colony, 1652 – 1870.” L. Thompson, 31.

blood than would seem to be necessary to impress on the minds of these savages a proper degree of terror and respect.”⁶⁹ The Great Trek of the 1830’s, seen as a “seminal event” in the development of Afrikaner nationalism,⁷⁰ can be attributed to number of precipitating events. One of these is economic. Another is the disturbance of the social order which accompanied the emancipation of the slaves in 1834.⁷¹ This disturbance in the social order was the placing of the freed slaves and the Khoikhoi servants “on an equal footing with Christians [read ‘Whites’], contrary to the laws of God and the natural distinction of race and colour.”⁷²

From 1887, when the first Adventist missionaries arrived, a succession of events transpired in South Africa that cannot be ignored. These events were to have far-reaching consequences on the political development of the South Africa of the time and would impact on events in South Africa to well into the 21st century.

The development of the Church cannot be studied in a vacuum. The impact of society cannot be minimised. To portray a history of the Church as though the Church developed in a parallel universe divorced from its surrounding is naive and denies the realities of historiography. In the preface to a collection of essays by 14 Seventh-day Adventist historians in the volume *The World of Ellen White*, the observation is correctly made: “. . . historical knowledge is essential to understanding the present.”⁷³ And that “historical knowledge” needs to factor in the socio-political milieu surrounding the development of the Church.

⁶⁹ MacLennan, ix.

⁷⁰ Worden, 13.

⁷¹ Du Pré, *Separate but Unequal*, 40, 43.

⁷² Worden, 13, 14.

⁷³ Land, ed., 10

This has been noted by other Seventh-day historians. In a paper presented to the *Adventist Theological Society* in December 2000, Ciro Sepulveda discusses the issue of the reinvention of Seventh-day Adventist history. He states: “By the end of the twentieth century, Adventist historians succeeded in reinventing the past, helping to place Adventist rootage and identity in the cradle of the national experience.”⁷⁴ He goes on to discuss the role that Seventh-day Adventist historians have played within the context of the worldview of their times and the direction in which their historiography was driven by those worldviews.

For example, reference is made to J. N. Loughborough whose 1905 *The Great Second Advent Movement* does not portray the history of the “Adventist movement as part of a historical continuum.”⁷⁵ He points out that this first history of the Adventist Church gives “no space to the Middle Ages, the Protestant Reformation, or Colonial America.”⁷⁶ This trend was followed by Matilda Erickson Andross who, in 1926, developed a reader for young people, sponsored by the General Conference, called *The Story of the Advent Movement*.

In the late 1920’s and ‘30’s, Mahlon Elsworth Olsen’s book *Origin and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists* became the standard history text for the Church. As Sepulveda points out, the book, published in 1925, “mirrored the changes that were taking place in Adventist identity and historiography.”⁷⁷ Olsen’s book links the history of the Advent movement with that of the reformers of the 16th century,

⁷⁴ Sepulveda, 1. At the time of the presentation of the paper Sepulveda was chair of the History Department at Oakwood University in Huntsville, Ala., and is past president of the *Association of Seventh-day Adventist Historians*.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

providing a connection to the Puritans, going so far as to include an illustration of the arrival of the Puritans on the *Mayflower*, thus placing the Adventist Church within the tradition of the reform movement lead by Martin Luther.

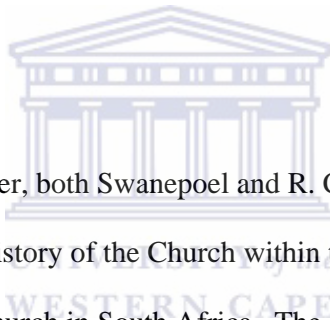
Other authors such as Le Roy Edwin Froom (1950's) and A W Spalding (1961) continued this trend, moving away from Loughborough and Andross' inclination of portraying the Church as an apocalyptic movement of prophecy that arose at a specific time for a specific purpose with a specific message. This uniqueness manifested itself in an almost "Malchizidekian" historical mode of having no beginning and no end, except that the Adventist Church at that time saw its sojourn on this earth as extremely short – its end was literally in sight.

In the period starting around the middle of the 20th century, there appears to be a definite departure from the Loughborough mode. Quoting from Sepulveda:

Articles in *Spectrum*, *Adventist Heritage*, and other Adventist journals on the Church's history in the second half of the century clearly supported the trend. In 1976 Ronald D. Graybill set forth the notion that a "new Adventist history" was in the making. He argued that the early historians, J. N. Loughborough and James White, wrote providential history, and that Nichols and Froom, in the middle of the century, produce apologetic history. However, with the advent of young Adventist historians with Ph.D. degrees from prestigious American universities, the historiography of the Church was about to produce the "real stuff." In his words: 'Those who write this history should strive to make Adventist history useful and credible to non Adventist scholars.'⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Sepulveda, 9

Thus a pattern emerges which portrays the early examination of the history of the development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as having taken place within a confined context. That context seemed to be limited to a recounting of events within a linear fashion without reference to the wider or broader society in which the Church was developing. Strangely enough, a study of Swanepoel and R. C. L. Thompson reflects a perpetuation of the earlier trend when they recount the history of the development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa. No attempt is made to contextualize the events of 1887 to 1960 – the period covered by the two authors – despite the works of Froom and Spalding and their attempts to place the history of the Church within the wider setting of ecclesiastical and sociological history.



In addition, as observed earlier, both Swanepoel and R. C. L. Thompson appear to be intent on recounting the history of the Church within the context of the development of the White Church in South Africa. The same can be said for Van Eck. More recently, Crocombe has attempted to reconstruct the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa with regard to racial history. While outlining the development of racial separation in the Church, he uses 1948 as the point of reference for *Apartheid* legislation. In this regard he fails to adequately factor in the history of South Africa.⁷⁹ This state of Adventist historiography in South Africa is not dissimilar to the documenting of secular history. Worden notes that “[t]he earliest histories of South Africa were concerned with its white inhabitants.”⁸⁰ Welsh observed that as a result of the establishment of a victualling station and trading post by the Dutch, the “methodical recording of South African

⁷⁹ J. Crocombe, “The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Southern Africa – Race Relations and Apartheid.”

⁸⁰ Worden, 2.

history” began.⁸¹ Du Pré states it thus: “History text-books were merely a ‘history of whites, for whites, by whites.’”⁸² As indicated in chapter three, Marquard suggests that

as long as those who write South Africa’s history come from the white minority only, it is likely to be biased against the non-European majority.⁸³

Even that “white minority” portrayed different histories: either lauding the achievements of the trekkers and their descendents or emphasizing the role of the British rulers and the settlers.⁸⁴

As discussed in chapters two and three and referred to earlier in this chapter, the histories written concerning the rise of Adventism in South Africa is a linear history which seems to ignore the developments in the political and social realm. This needs to be re-examined. The early history of the Church in South Africa needs to be placed within the context of South African history in the 19th and 20th centuries.

In 1987 *The World of Ellen White* attempted to place the early history of the Church in America within the context of American society in the 19th century.⁸⁵ George Knight, in his series of books on Seventh-day Adventist Church history, likewise takes up the task of placing the events surrounding the development of the Church and the personalities associated with it within the socio-political milieu of the time.⁸⁶

⁸¹ Welsh, 20.

⁸² Du Pré, *Separate but Unequal*, 112.

⁸³ Marquard, 16.

⁸⁴ Worden, 2.

⁸⁵ Land, *The World of Ellen White*.

⁸⁶ See bibliography re George Knight

Similarly, in looking at the Wilson “principle,” cognizance must be taken of the socio-political milieu of the time. The meetings of the South African Union Conference and the Cape Conference at which the decisions were taken to establish a separate structure to govern the work amongst its Coloured members and the Coloured population of South Africa was taken by individuals living within a particular context within a specific time in the history of this country. How they related to and were affected by those issues needs to be factored into the historical account of those events.

By the time the 1930 action was taken, the Kimberley labour force was racially divided.⁸⁷ Robert Turrill indicates that this division was supported by Social Darwinism.⁸⁸ Dr V. Bickford-Smith suggests that, as from the late 1870’s, English-speaking imagery incorporated Social Darwinist concepts in descriptions of Malay and Coloured persons in the Cape.⁸⁹ Another factor behind this division was that South Africa had come through bitter and bloody struggles in the fight by the Afrikaner Republics for freedom and independence from the British; hard-fought battles had been waged around the negotiating tables to hammer out the articles of Union at the 1909 National Convention.⁹⁰ Political unity for the sake of economic prosperity was a British priority. The Afrikaner had to be brought into the political

⁸⁷ Worden, 44.

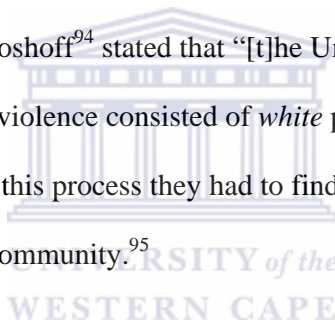
⁸⁸ R. V. Turrell, *Capital and Labour in the Cape Diamond Fields 1871-1890*, Cambridge University Press, 1987, p. 56. Cited in Saul Dubow, *Scientific Racism in South Africa*, Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 128.

⁸⁹ V. Bickford-Smith, ‘Class, Commerce and Ethnicity in Cape Town, 1875 – 1902.’ D. Phil thesis, Cambridge University, 1988, p. 181. Cited in Saul Dubow, p. 128.

⁹⁰ Du Pré, *Separate but Unequal*, 48-50. Du Pré argues against the term “National Convention” being used as it “implies inclusion of all organizations/political parties/groups/people who constitute the nation or the country.” 49. The National Convention of 1909 excluded the indigenous people of South Africa. It was a meeting of 30 members of the White minority called by the British parliament to determine the future of South Africa, *sans* the majority of the inhabitants of the country.

fold to ensure that that goal was achieved at all costs. One of those “costs” was the steady and continued erosion of Black rights. Article 8 of the Treaty of Vereeniging signed 31 May, 1902, states: “The question of granting the Franchise to Natives will not be decided until after the introduction of Self-Government.”⁹¹ This did not materialize until 1994.

Worden comments: “In an ominous sign of what lay ahead, white unity [at the time of Union] . . . was upheld at the expense of black political and land rights.”⁹² Kenny comments on the conditions for the formation of Union by stating that “there would have been no union at all had it not been based on the acceptance of indefinite white supremacy.”⁹³ Carel Boshoff⁹⁴ stated that “[t]he Union of South Africa that was brought into being with violence consisted of *white* politics to the exclusion of the non-white sectors. . . . In this process they had to find a way of cooperating with the English-speaking *white* community.”⁹⁵



Black economic rights were also systematically being eroded. A cynical example of this can be seen in the mining sector where, by the early twentieth century, Blacks had acquired expertise in such skills as rock drilling. In order to employ Blacks to perform these tasks which had previously been performed by immigrants and Whites, the mine owners, in wanting to pay the Blacks lower wages while retaining

⁹¹ "Peace of Vereeniging." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. 2009. Encyclopædia Britannica Online. [18 Sep. 2009] <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/625979/Peace-of-Vereeniging> [September, 2009].

⁹² Worden, 36.

⁹³ Kenny, 39.

⁹⁴ Carel Boshoff IV is a descendant of a leading Afrikaner family. He runs Orania, a White Afrikaner homeland that was established in 1991 in the Northern Cape Province of South Africa.

⁹⁵ Fisher, 13.

the skilled-unskilled job differentiation with the concomitant differentiation in pay, got around this technicality by “declaring such work ‘deskilled.’”⁹⁶

The Rand Revolt of 1922 in which White workers rebelled in the face of decreasing wages and the shedding of previously well-paid jobs to Blacks through “deskilling,” had as its slogan “Workers of the world unite and fight for a White South Africa.”⁹⁷ While the uprising was quelled by Smuts, it led to an upsurge in Afrikaner nationalism leading to the fall of the Smuts’ United Party government in 1924 and marked a new drive towards racial segregation.⁹⁸ In fact the 1922 Stallard Doctrine was formulated which entrenched the divide between the Black and White citizens of this country. The Doctrine upheld:

That it should be a recognised principle of government that natives – men, women and children – should only be permitted within municipal areas in so far and for so long as their presence is demanded by the wants of the white population.⁹⁹

Racial segregation and discrimination was not the preserve of South Africa in the late 19th century and early 20th century. Its roots are complex. Its origins can be found in colonial conquest coupled with Black enslavement. In the scramble for Africa during the mid-nineteenth century, the need was seen to civilize the inferior natives. Coupled to the social Darwinism referred to earlier, the scene was set for White supremacy in America, South Africa and other British and European

⁹⁶ Ibid., 58.

⁹⁷ Worden, 60.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Quoted by Kenny, 41.

colonies in Africa and Asia.¹⁰⁰ Blacks were thought to be primitive, sluggards and less intelligent.¹⁰¹

In South Africa, discrimination was similarly not the preserve of Afrikaners. Many ascribe *Apartheid* with its laws of separation to the National Party that came to power in 1948. But this belief discounts the racial discrimination of British officials and settlers. Kenny states it succinctly thus:

There is in fact not much of a mystery about apartheid. It was an intensified form of that white supremacy which passed under the name of segregation before 1948 and to which virtually the whole white population of South Africa subscribed¹⁰²

Going back to the 1812 regulations which indentured Khoikhoi children and to Ordinance 49 of 1828 which imposed pass controls on African workers in the Cape Colony, South Africa systematically developed an ideology of racism that shaped the social, economic and political structure in a more pervasive way than in any other country in the world.¹⁰³

While the basic tenets of segregation was laid down by the Smuts government prior to 1924, it was the Hertzog ‘Pact’ government – the alliance between the Labour and the National Party – that set the scene for full-blown segregation under the National party from 1924 onwards. An example of this was the 1926 Mines and Works Amendment Act which gave government power to enforce the colour bar in private industry. This “civilized labour policy” established differential wage scales

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 74.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Kenny, preface, 7.

¹⁰³ Worden, 74.

for persons of different colour. This was done on the basis of recognizing the need of those

‘whose standard of living conforms to the standard of living generally recognized as tolerable from the usual European standpoint’ and others ‘whose aim is restricted to the barer requirements of the necessities of life as understood among barbarous and underdeveloped peoples.’¹⁰⁴

A culture of separation or *Apartheid* had thus crept into the psyche of the South African. Correspondence between Pieter Wessels’ brother, Phillip, and E.G. White indicate to what extent this was viewed as prevalent amongst a section of the South African population linked to the early development of the Church.

A fairly lengthy passage is quoted to illustrate the point:

So there is the colour line wthich [sic] is very distinctly drawn here in society. For my part I do not care I can shake hand with the colored people and so forth. But our association with them is going to spoil our influence with others who are accustomed to these things. And the colored people they are satisfiend [sic] in their position. Here are some people who do not care about any distinction. But they are mostly foregeners [sic] who come from countries where there are no black people. And at first or those who do not deal with the colored think that a great wrong is done to the colored people. But they are not here long or have long to deal with them when they are worst than the others who tey [sic] first critisezed [sic]. So it goes. I had servants vho [sic] labored for me years and they were attatched [sic] to me. But they were kept in their positein [sic] . . . I feel there is no diferance [sic] before God and their salvation is a burden on my heart and trust ere long the Gen Con shall lay plans not only to talk

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 84.

about heathen but go to the heathen and help them. But here we are in a country and among a people where these things are so and to have any influence with the Higher class of people we must respect these difderances [sic]. As fas [sic] as we can. . . . Further more [sic] I do not want my children to associate with the lower class or colored people. I will labor for them and teach my children to do so but I do not want to have my children mix up with them for such is detrimental to their moral well fare. Nor do I mant [sic] my children to think there is no diferance [sic] in society that they should finally associate and marry into colored blood as some Europeans do

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Ellen White's response to him indicates that she does not share his view with regard to the separation of persons based on colour. She states: "You speak of the color line: bear in mind there is no color or caste or distinction with God."¹⁰⁶

Phillip responds to her, expressing his views as unchanged from his January, 1893, letter. He is so incensed with Mrs White's response that he counters by saying:

The best in the long run is to be kind to the colored but keep them in tteir [sic] position in their line and you have no trouble. . . . [O]ur Dutch population keeps that line very clear, and some here are beginning to talk about the matter.¹⁰⁷

He ends his letter by saying he will enter into no further correspondence with her. (He does, however, write to her again on January 29, 1899.)

The crass attitude expressed by Phillip Wessels found resonance within Afrikaner Nationalism which progressively developed to where it gave rise to full-blown

¹⁰⁵ Correspondence Document File 506; Letter written by Phillip Wessels to E. G. White, 18 January, 1893.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., Letter written by E. G. White to Phillip Wessels, 17 March, 1893

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., Letter written by Phillip Wessels to E. G. White, 10 July 1893

Apartheid. D. F. Malan, the prime minister who inaugurated the *Apartheid* dispensation, once said:

The history of the Afrikaner reveals a determination and a definiteness of purpose which makes one feel that Afrikanerdom is not the work of man but a creation of God. We have a Divine right to be Afrikaners. *Our history is the highest work of art of the Architect of the centuries* (emphasis supplied).¹⁰⁸

It was in this type of culture that the White South African and American missionaries sought to guide the Church at a time when racial tensions and battle-lines were being drawn.

A comment made by Phillip Wessels bears consideration. He indicates that there are those who come to this country from other countries that have no Blacks and who are thus critical of the way Coloureds are handled in this country. He goes on to say that those same individuals, according to his observation, become worse than the South Africans once they have been here for a while. This same observation is made in interviews with older surviving members of the Church who lived during the Cape Field era. The perception is that “the Americans and British” practised *Apartheid* to a greater degree than South African Whites. The observation would often be made that you could more easily trust the Boer/Afrikaner, as you know where you stood with him, than the Englishman, who appeared to be liberal but who stabbed you in the back. Sol Plaatje stated that “the English colonist can be just as devilish as the Boers on questions of colour; and that some of them had almost out-Boered the Boer in this matter.”¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Du Pré, *Separate but Unequal*, 241.

¹⁰⁹ Plaatje, 84.

Another account which reflects the attitude of some to Non-White persons is found in the experience of I. B. Burton, referred to in chapter three. Reporting on a mission trip he made up North he describes his departure from the Cape area;

Our long journey began on May 7, 1894 At the Claremont Railway Station they stopped to take on the writer with a box and bedding, and with a coloured man, I drove on to Paarl, a distance of about forty miles.¹¹⁰

It would not be unreasonable to suppose that, on a journey that was to take some months; that a companion who started out with you would have introduced himself to you or, at the least, over the journey of 40 miles, you would have learnt his name. Further describing his trip, he recounts their arrival at Vryburg. He describes the rest of the party that would be undertaking the trip with him:

There on the platform are the rest of the party . . . [that] now numbered seven whose names were: A. Druillard, P. J. D. Wessels, Fred Sparrow, J. H. Harvey, A. Geopp, J. Landsman and the writer.¹¹¹

In contrast with the description of his first companion who was described simply as “a coloured man,” his other associates, presumably all White, are all named, down to their second or third initials. He further describes their trip north with his companions, none of whom, judging by their names, appear to be Black. However, when he describes them setting up camp for the night, A. Geopp is reported as having gone up “to one of the native boys and accosted him with these words. ‘Can you speak Kafir?’”¹¹² His party of “seven” thus included at least one Coloured and two Blacks, none of whom deserved the courtesy of having their names recorded or

¹¹⁰ Burton, 3

¹¹¹ Ibid., 6.

¹¹² Ibid. 11

their being acknowledge as part of the “party . . . [that] now numbered seven.” His reminiscing further includes references to “Hottentots and Kaffirs” who liked to make use of snuff.¹¹³

The Phillip Wessels and Burton incidents around the turn of the century are mirrored in a report which appeared in *The Friend*, a Cape Town newspaper in which it reported that “[s]pecial donations also provided for the building of a ward to accommodate Cape Coloured persons as patients [at the Cape Sanitarium at Plumstead].” 2 April, 1919. The import of the article was to signify the separation being brought about in the Adventist Sanitarium in which a separate ward was being built for Coloureds. This accompanied the discussions regarding accepting Coloured students at Union College and a separate primary school operated for Coloureds alongside the parallel programme of Union College.

Appendix III and IV outlines a selected chronology of the socio-political development of South Africa and the development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church respectively. A comparative parallelization of the information is reflected in Appendix V which depicts the developments on the political front since the encounter of Hunt with Wessels and Van Druten up to the 1930 action in which the “principle” is referred to. A study of the material makes it clear that dramatic changes were taking place in South Africa, specifically with regard to relationships between the different races. The White population was banding together to enact and enforce laws that were systematically restricting the rights and activities of the Non-White population. Furthermore, the Non-White population was caught up in a sub-struggle between the English and the Afrikaner.

¹¹³ Ibid., 29.

The Church could have exercised a number of options with regard to the political situation in the country:

1. It could have exercised its prophetic voice and declared itself opposed to any laws of any government which discriminated against its citizens and consigned them to 2nd or 3rd class status.
2. It could have actively opposed the government and engaged in public protest against the successive laws which were being enacted, each one designed to increase the restriction of rights, movement and privileges of its citizens ultimately to the point of depriving the indigenous inhabitants of their citizenship.
3. It could have actively supported the government by ensuring that the laws as passed by government be applied within the realm of church governance and policies
4. It could have chosen to recognize the changes being brought about in the political realm and determine that they would seek to be inclusive towards the different groups within the Church and to resist discrimination towards their members as far as it was within their power to do so.

What position did the Church adopt? The Church appeared to turn a blind eye to what was transpiring. At a time when

1. pass laws had been imposed;

2. separate residential areas allocated;
3. job reservation instituted;
4. separate administrations for different racial groups established;
5. both the ANC and the APO had appealed to Britain to step in and halt the encroaching erosion of rights of Non-Whites;
6. when Ghandi had led a general strike of Indians in Natal;
7. when a delegation to Britain to protest against the inclusion of racial clauses in the Union of South Africa constitution had failed;¹¹⁴

the Church responds by

1. debating whether Coloured and Black students should be allowed to attend Union College;
2. setting up a separate primary school for Coloureds running parallel with the programme at Union College;
3. separating the Black churches into separate Missions;
4. moving the names of Coloured members and churches to a “Coloured Department”;
5. setting up pay structures that clearly distinguishes between Whites, Coloureds and Blacks;
6. setting up a separate structure for its Coloured members based on a “principle.”

When a statement is issued to the government by the Church in 1921, the context indicates its desire to be disassociated from the “Israelites” whose rebellion had

¹¹⁴ Du Pré, 47.

been put down with the massacre at Bulhok in 1921.¹¹⁵ The statement's introduction indicates that "it becomes right and proper that we should assure you of our loyalty and devotion to the Government under which we enjoy great peace."¹¹⁶ The statement goes on further to give the position of the Church in that "we endeavour to use our influence for the promotion of peace and loyalty to the Government in authority."¹¹⁷ In attempting to reassure the Government that the Church would respect the laws of the day and would not resist or oppose the rulers of the day, the Church goes on to say:

Whereas, influences are sometimes set working among the natives which result in greatly adding to the burdens of our rulers, we therefore kindly beg that your Royal Highness will allow us to set before you our attitude toward such influences. We deplore any movement which results in unrest among any people. In harmony with the principles above set forth, not only do we refuse to participate in movements of sedition or rebellion, but we endeavour to use our influence for the promotion of peace and loyalty to the Government in authority.¹¹⁸

What is remarkable is that the "unrest" caused by the Israelites referred to in the statement was the premillennial fervour in which they expected the millennium to be preceded by a "violent second coming." Their leader ordered them to occupy the municipal property of Ntabelanga near Queenstown to await the imminent coming

¹¹⁵ The Israelites or Church of God and Saints of Christ was a branch of the Zionist movement with arose on African soil around 1897. They were led by Enoch Mgijima. The group erected their holy city on land that belonged to the state at Ntabelanga, near Bulhoek in the Queenstown district. The government sought to use force to evict its unarmed members from this property. One hundred and eighty-three were killed or fatally wounded and 129 wounded. See Elphick and Davenport, 218 - 219 and 345-346. See also Worden, 62.

¹¹⁶ Statement issued 21 January 1921 by the 10th Session held at Johannesburg. Joint meeting of Union Conference and the two Union Mission Fields.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

of Christ.¹¹⁹ The 1921 statement seems to suggest that the Israelites were also seventh-day Sabbath observers. The Church was quick to issue a statement disassociating itself from this group.

However, we do not find a statement from the Church disassociating it from the restrictive and unjust rules being imposed upon the citizens of South Africa, including members of the Church. Swanepoel, on the contrary, observes: “Thus the church dissociated itself from the wave of political and social unrest that was plaguing South Africa at the time.”¹²⁰

A second statement issued by the Church, while it was made after the Wilson “principle” was enunciated, illustrates the consistent thinking of the Church in relation to the government. This was despite the racial laws the government was enacting. In a statement made by the March 1937 South African Union Conference at its 17th Constituency Meeting, the preamble gives hope that the Church was about to exercise its prophetic role when it commences by stating:

Deploing the decline of democratic principles, and the ever-increasing infringement over wide areas of the work of human liberties which have been rescued from the hand of tyranny at so great a cost, and recognizing more than ever that “Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty,”

However, the statement flatters to deceive by continuing:

. . . therefore

Be it Resolved, That as loyal citizens of the Union of South Africa, we, the delegates of the South African Union Conference of

¹¹⁹ Elphick and Davenport, 345-346

¹²⁰ Swanepoel, 154.

Seventh-day Adventists, assembled in Bloemfontein, O.F.S., South Africa, express to His Excellency Sir Patrick Duncan, G.C.M.G. Governor General of the Union of South Africa, and to the Right Honourable, the Prime Minister, General J.B.M. Hertzog, P.C. to the Right Honourable, the Minister of Justice, General J.C. Smuts, P.C. and to Parliament, our profound appreciation and respect for their *fidelity to the democratic traditions in the maintenance of civil and religious liberty for all of their subjects* (emphasis supplied).

Between the 1921 and the 1937 statements, the following political developments took place:

- Natives (Urban Areas) Act provides for urban segregation and African influx control (1923)
- Industrial Conciliation Act excludes migrant workers from trade union representation (1923)
- Mines and Works Amendment Act extends employment colour bar (1926)
- Colour Bar Act prevents Blacks from practicing skilled trades (1926)
- Hertzog's 'Coloured' Bills to give Coloureds greater political rights (1926)
- Native Administration Act 'retribalizes' African government and law (1927)
- White, but not Coloured, women enfranchised (1930)
- Act No. 35 makes it possible to challenge qualifications of Non-White voters (1931)
- Native Service Contract Act restricts Black labour tenants on White-owned farms (1932)
- Slums Act gives local municipalities right to move inhabitants of low-grade housing (1934)

- Native Land and Trust Act consolidates reserves (1936)
- Representation of Natives Act removes Africans from Cape common franchise (1936)
- Marketing Act gives state subsidies to White farmers (1937)
- Native Laws Amendment Act intensifies urban pass laws (1937)
- National Party withdraws Hertzog laws. (1937)
- Commission of Inquiry into Coloured group (1937) ¹²¹

Despite the laws and regulations promulgated by the Government as cited above, the Church, in its statement, expresses its “*profound appreciation and respect for their fidelity to the democratic traditions in the maintenance of civil and religious liberty for all of their subjects*” ¹²²(emphasis supplied). The reader is left to speculate as to how the Church interpreted the ideology of separation as practiced by the government of the day as being upholding “the democratic tradition”.

The statement, laudably, goes on to state the position of the Church with regard to the unification of Church and State and its opposition of any attempt at laws being passed that would suppress freedom of conscience and the right to practice religion according to the dictates of one’s conscience.

It closes the statement thus:

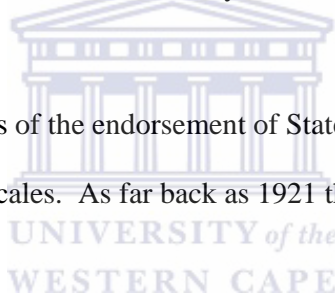
¹²¹ See Appendix III. The Commission of Inquiry of 1937 under the United Party recommended the establishment of special sections in government departments to deal with matters concerning Coloured interests, including the institution of Coloured group areas, etc. The outcome was the setting up on the Coloured Affairs Department. Du Pré, 145.

¹²² SAUC 17th Session 1937.

We believe it to be our duty to use every lawful and honourable means to prevent religious legislation, and to oppose all movement tending to unite church and state, and to guard jealously the inalienable and constitutional rights of free speech, free press, peaceable assembly, and the right of petition, that all may enjoy the blessings of civil and religious liberty.

Notwithstanding the above, it appears as though the Church in its 1921 and 1937 statements supported the government in the direction it took with no censure being expressed at the systematic erosion of human rights in the pursuance of its ideologically driven policy of separation. It appears that a “principle” of separation was being enforced by the State and endorsed by the Church.

One of the most glaring cases of the endorsement of State discrimination can be seen in the matter of salary scales. As far back as 1921 the SAUC passed this resolution:¹²³



Resolved in order that there might be equality, the following wage scale be adopted with the understanding that it is not the intention that at this time there be any general increase in wages, but that each individual case be considered on its merits, and further, that there be no general rent allowance to workers.

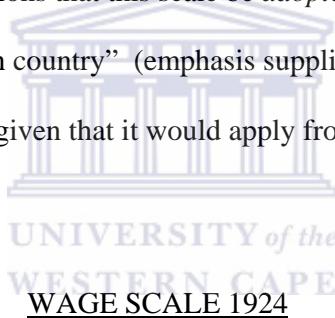
Presidents Union Conferences	£27.0.0 to 34.0.0
Sec. And Treas. Of Unions	23.10.0 to 31.0.0
Presidents Local Conferences	23.10.0 to 31.0.0
Ordained Ministers	21.0.0 to 28.0.0
Licensed Ministers	12.10.0 to 20.0.0

¹²³ SAUC EXCOM minutes, June 19, 1921.

Church School Teachers	10.0.0 to 16.0.0
Stenographers and Office Assistants	8.0.0 to 16.0.0

By 1926, the same year in which the Mines and Workers Amendment Act, referred to earlier, which established differential salary and wages rates based on race, this practice was not only adopted but perpetuated by the Church to the point where a White junior secretary was paid more than an ordained, senior Coloured minister.

A record in the South African Division Executive Committee minutes of 13 January 1924 indicates that the General Conference had prepared a new wage scale and “it is recommended to the Divisions that this scale be *adopted* and if necessary be *adapted* to conditions in each country” (emphasis supplied). The new wage scale was adopted and notice was given that it would apply from the first of January, 1924, as follows:



(1) <u>GROUPS OF WORKERS</u>	<u>MINIMUM</u>	<u>MAXIMUM</u>
General Conference vice-presidents	39-0-0	43-0-0
Union Conf. Presidents		
Union Mission superintendents	35-0-0	42-0-0
Division Sec. & Treas		
Division Field secs. 24		
Sanitarium superintendents		
Division departmental secretaries		
Local Conference presidents		
Mission field superintendents	25-0-0	39-0-0
Sanitarium business managers		
Branch publishing house managers		

Physicians		
Junior College presidents		
Union conference sec.		
Treasurers		
Union Conference departmental sec		
Ordained ministers		
Mission station directors	25-0-0	38-0-0
Academy principals (Eu. and mission)		
Local Conf. Dept. secretaries (men)		
Local conference mission field secretary-treasurers	18-0-0	30-0-0
Junior college dept heads (men)		
Licensed ministers		
Mission station workers (not ordained)	18-0-0	30-0-0
Bible Workers (ladies Sanitarium supt. of nurses (ladies)	10-0-0	18-0-0
Sanitarium head nurses (ladies)		
Sanitarium matrons		
Local Conf. Dept. secretaries (ladies)		
Stenographers and clerks		
Local conference or mission field workers (unmarried)	8-0-0	18-0-0
Church school teachers		

In the SAUC Salary Scale of 1921 and the Division Wage Scales of 1924, there appears to be no differentiation based on colour. However, a comparison is made in terms of the scales adapted and voted by the Cape Conference on the 26th of January 1926.

GROUPS OF WORKERS MIN MAX WORKER SALARY

General Conference vice-presidents 39-0-0 43-0-0

Union Conf. Presidents
 Union Mission superintendents 35-0-0 42-0-0
 Division Sec. & Treas
 Division Field secs. 24
 Sanitarium superintendents

Division departmental secretaries
 Local Conference presidents 25-0-0 39-0-0 L. Moffitt 36-10-0
 Mission field superintendents
 Sanitarium business managers
 Branch publishing house managers
 Physicians
 Junior College presidents
 Union conference sec. Treasurers
 Union Conference departmental sec



Ordained ministers F. G. 27-0-0
 Mission station directors 25-0-0 38-0-0 Clifford 31-0-0
 Academy principals (Eu. and mission) W. C. Tarr 4-0-0
 Local Conf. Dept. secretaries (men) D. C. Theunissen 5-0-0

A. F. Minter

Local conference mission field secretary-treasurers Junior college dept heads (men)	18-0-0	30-0-0	Willmore	21-0-0
Licensed ministers Mission station workers (not ordained)	18-0-0	30-0-0		
Bible Workers (ladies Sanitarium supt. of nurses (ladies) Sanitarium head nurses (ladies) Sanitarium matrons Local Conf. Dept. secretaries (ladies)	10-0-0	18-0-0		
Stenographers and clerks	8-0-0	18-0-0	Miss A. C. Flemming	16-0-0
Local conference or mission field workers (unmarried) Church school teachers			Miss S. Mouke	14-0-0



An examination of the above indicates that all of the workers were being paid within the minimum and maximum rates adopted by the Division in 1924, except for two. Both Theunissen and Minter were Coloured. Apparently they suffered the misfortune of falling within the category, so crassly described by the Mines and Workers Amendment Act of 1926, as those “whose aim is restricted to the barer requirements of the necessities of life as understood among barbarous and underdeveloped peoples.”¹²⁴ Thus the Cape Conference and other Church entities within South Africa adapted the salary scales, apparently in keeping with the

¹²⁴ Ibid., 84.

discriminatory and derogatory practice developed and implemented by the government.

The salary scales of the Cape Conference of 1926 goes on to list the salaries of the following Black employees, apparently also of the “barbarous and underdeveloped peoples”:

Brother Simon	3.10.0
Brother Kobe	3. 0.0
Brother Amos	3. 0.0
Bradford Scott	3.10.0 ¹²⁵

While government regulations brought about differentiation in salary scales, nothing in the regulations compelled the church or any other organization to pay its employees on a differentiated scale. This disparity, reflected in the 1926 budget, continued right through well into the 1990's. During the merger discussions between the White Cape Conference, the Coloured Good Hope Conference and the Black Southern Conference, one of the items that were agreed on was a five-year phase in of salary equalization. What is remarkable about this is twofold:

1. Firstly, that there still existed a differentiated pay-scale, 70 years after its implementation – by this time Mandela had been released; the ANC had been unbanned; the Group Areas Act had been scrapped; the Population Registration Act had been repealed; job reservation had been abolished and even the Immorality Act no longer existed.

¹²⁵ A note is then added: “All other native brethren to be paid the same as they received last year.”

2. When discussions took place regarding the disparity in pay-scales, benefits and allowances, the tripartite discussions, under the watchful eye of the Southern Africa Union Conference, reached consensus on a *five-year phase-in period of salary and allowances equalization*.

Reflecting on the Church's position regarding discrimination, the 1998 statement to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission states the following:

We confess that we were altogether too caught up with maintaining our traditional a-political stance with regard to the separation of church and state to effectively combat the viciousness of apartheid. Under the pressure of the times we allowed the structures of the church to gradually become patterned along the lines of apartheid, by providing separate church regional organisations for different racial groups within the church. We failed to realize that the state demanded of its citizens things to which it had no claim and that, as Christians, we should have resisted this usurpation of God's authority to the uttermost.¹²⁶

Through the "Confession" the Church recognized that it stood to one side as the "state demanded of its citizens things to which it had not claim" The full text of the Confession declares *Apartheid* to be a heresy. It acknowledges that "it allowed the structures of the church to gradually become patterned along the lines of apartheid"

The Church states that it should have resisted the "usurpation of God's authority to the uttermost." It is laudable that the Church is able to analyse what it *should have*

¹²⁶ See Appendix II.

done. However, what the Church does not say in the Confession is “Sorry” for what it *did* do.

It does not recognize its pro-active support of government structures and regulations as illustrated in the disparate salary scales. As Pantalone correctly observes, it shifted the blame for the application and proactive implementation of *Apartheid* from the Church to the state through glibly stating its reason for adhering to *Apartheid* practices as having operated “under the pressure of the times”.¹²⁷

This Confession came five years after an apology for *Apartheid* was made by the National Party’s chief constitutional negotiator, Roelf Meyer:

We who were responsible for apartheid are now saying that we want to leave that wrong behind. We are saying we are sorry. But we are also saying we are now determined to rectify what went wrong.¹²⁸

Thus, in considering the 1930 action to set up a separate structure for the Coloured members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa, the conclusion must be reached that the “principle” upon which it was based was that of separateness or *Apartheid* as introduced and enforced by successive governments and emulated by the Church.

The Formation of the Good Hope Conference

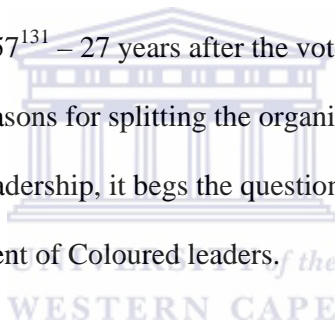
When examining the transition of the Cape Field to a “self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating organization,” R. C. L. Thompson describes it as “the

¹²⁷ Pantalone, 309.

¹²⁸ Du Pré, *Separate but Unequal*, 250.

most significant administrative change in the South African Division.”¹²⁹ While various mission fields had been established with largely White leadership and a dependence on the Union for financial support, this would be the first Conference being established with a totally Non-White leadership team.

This development took place 60 years after the Cape Conference action to separate the Coloured Church from the Cape Conference because of the “develop[ment] [of] strong leaders and efficient Church officers in Churches organised for and officered by our Coloured believers under the direction of the Coloured Department.”¹³⁰ As noted earlier, the first Coloured persons appointed to positions of leadership in the Cape Field took office in 1957¹³¹ – 27 years after the vote to split the Cape Conference. If one of the reasons for splitting the organization on a racial basis was due to the well-developed leadership, it begs the question why a period of 27 elapsed before the appointment of Coloured leaders.



With the establishment of the Good Hope Conference, as with the Cape Field, the question needs to be asked as to whether this was the desire or decision of the Coloured members of the Church. A perusal of the minutes of the Cape Field in the years preceding the transition from field to conference reveals no such minute or action or agitation on the part of the membership of the field.

This does not presuppose that there was no such agitation: what we do not have is any indication from the minutes that such discussion or request came from the

¹²⁹ Thompson, R. C. L., 261.

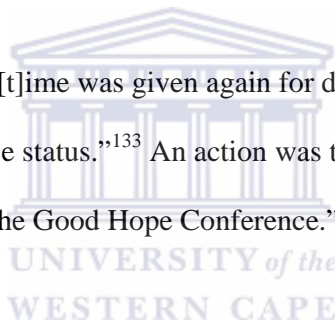
¹³⁰ CC594/165/30

¹³¹ The following persons were elected at the 3rd Session of the Cape Field Constituency Meeting held in December, 1957: M. Z. Cornelius – Publishing Director; A.D. Jephthas – Assistant Secretary; A. R. Grove – Home Missionary Secretary. See Session Minutes.

membership. The first indication we have in the Cape Field minutes of such a transition being envisaged is in a statement made by the Union president to the Cape Field constituency meeting in December, 1959.

The Union Conference President gave a resume of the organization's growth and progress, and explained that we have now reached the stage where the constituency could choose to become a Conference. The Union and Division had already taken action opening the way for such a move. Elder Kohen moved that we accept Conference status and Brother D. J. Williams seconded the motion. The meeting was then thrown open for discussion which took considerable time. The meeting adjourned for lunch and Elder G. Beyers closed in prayer.¹³²

Following the lunch break, "[t]ime was given again for discussion and it was VOTED to accept Conference status."¹³³ An action was taken later in the day to name the new conference "The Good Hope Conference."¹³⁴



The first president chosen for and by the Good Hope Conference was Pastor Kenneth Landers. Du Preez and Du Pré state that the White leadership present at the formation of the Conference wished to have the last president of the Cape Field, Pastor A. C. Le Butt, retained in the leadership of the new conference. This view infers that, despite the setting up of an independent, self-funded, self-propagating Coloured organization, the White leadership still considered it necessary for Coloureds to be under White leadership and governance. This view is defensible.

¹³² Cape Field Session Minutes, Dec 20 1959, p. 4.

¹³³ CF Session Minutes, 7/5/59.

¹³⁴ CF Session Minutes, 19/14/59.

The Cape Field, in its 27 years of existence, remained under White leadership. This, despite the 1930 statement with regard to the well-developed leadership amongst the Coloured membership. The school that was set up specifically for the training of “our coloured” members remained under ‘White’¹³⁵ leadership from its establishment in 1929 through to 1975. It would not have been inconsistent, therefore, for the White leadership under the direction of the Union, to seek to maintain White control over the new entity.

Going back to the statement made by the Union president prior to the vote being taken to form the new conference, the minutes of the Division and Union indicate that the decision to form the Good Hope Conference was taken at those levels. The South African Division year-end executive committee which met November 18, 1958 took the following action: “VOTED: to open the way for the SAUC to organize the Cape Field as a self-supporting conference as from 1959.”¹³⁶ This was followed up by the action taken by the SAUC: “VOTED, To accept and record Division Action 133/61 as follows: ‘VOTED: to open the way for the SAUC to organize the Cape Field as a self-supporting Conference as from 1959.’”¹³⁷

Despite these actions taken by the two higher organizations in at the end of 1958 with a target date being set “as from 1959,” the minutes of the Cape Field for that year reveal no discussion or plans being laid for such a step to be taken. On the contrary, when the regular constituency meeting was scheduled and planned for the end of 1959, no mention is made of the impending formation of a new Conference.

¹³⁵ See discussion on pages 169 - 179 with regard to A. V. Sutherland, the first principal. Although she was Coloured, she was considered White by the leadership of the time.

¹³⁶ SAD 133/61/58

¹³⁷ SAUC Grp II Minutes 4 December 1958, SAUC 2/1206/277/58.

The minutes are silent on the issue. In the light of R. C. L. Thompson's assessment of this being the most significant organizational development since the formation of the South African Conference in 1902,¹³⁸ this silence is all the more remarkable.

During the period 1933 to 1959 – the period that the Coloured membership had been separated from the Cape Conference, which now had become an all-White conference – various events can be traced which reflect a consolidation of the racial divide between the different sectors of the Church. These developments reflected the ever-increasing separation between the races within the socio-political arena.

The Depression Realignment of the Church had brought about the temporary amalgamation of the two Conferences, the Cape Conference and the Natal-Transvaal Conference as well as that of the Kaffirland and the Transvaal-Delgoa Mission Fields. As discussed on page 156, the work of the Coloured community was separated from that of the Cape Conference, ostensibly to accommodate the effects of the Depression.

At the commencement of 1936 this arrangement altered: a note found in the new Cape Conference Secretary's minute book records "In January, 1936 the South African Conference divided and the old plan reverted to for the Natal-Transvaal Conference and Cape Conference to operate separately." The Cape Conference was indeed a new conference – the numbering of the minutes were restarted with action 1/1/36. The numbering classification used universally within the Church in South Africa incorporated the arrangement where the first numeral represented the action

¹³⁸ Thompson, R. C. L., 261.

number; the second numeral indicated the page number; the last numeral indicated the year. If it was a reversion to “the old plan” the minutes should have continued from where it left off in 1933. One of the final minutes of the Cape Conference in the pre-depression era was adopted on the same day that the SAUC Session voted to implement the Depression Realignment.¹³⁹ It reads thus:

VOTED, That we adopt in the Cape Conference the resolution passed on to us by the South African Union Conference to amalgamate the two local Conferences into one united field.¹⁴⁰

The above minute number, CC 412/98/33, brings to an end the old Cape Conference. However, if the “old plan” was being reverted to, it would have continued the page numbering; it would also have needed to include the Coloured members who had been a part of the Cape Conference since its inception as the South African Conference in 1902. Thus the classification of the minutes and the exclusion of the Coloured members indicated a break with the past – excepting that the name was retained.

It considering the action taken on the 23rd of April, 1933, cognizance must be taken of the 1930 action by both the SAUC and the CC to separate the Coloured work based on the Wilson “principle.” If the Wilson “principle” was indeed a principle, why had nothing happened between 1930 and 1933? Why is it that a commission set up on the 14th of April, 1933 – nine days before the Depression Realignment – comes up with a proposal ostensibly based on finance which is then accepted and implemented by the SAUC and the CC within a matter of days? It raises the question whether the Depression Realignment was a possible ruse to effect the

¹³⁹ See CC and SAUC Session minutes, April 23, 1933.

¹⁴⁰ CC412/98/33

separation of the Coloured Department from the Cape Conference in a way that would not raise any awkward questions. R. C. L. Thompson alludes to the racial nature of the realignment by indicating that

The *European* South African Conference reverted to the Natal-Transvaal and Cape Conferences. A new Mission Field came into existence known as the Cape Field for the *Coloureds* of South Africa with J. N. de Beer as Field Superintendent (emphasis supplied).¹⁴¹

During the 17th Session of the SAUC which commenced on the 28th of March, 1937, a report was rendered by the president of the Cape Conference, W. H. Hurlow. The report commences thus:

Elder W. H. Hurlow then rendered a report from the Cape Conference. The report dealt with one year only, it being the first year in the re-organization of the Cape Conference following the dissolution of the South African Conference in 1936.¹⁴²

Thus in the minutes of the Cape Conference and the report to the SAUC, the concept of a totally new Cape Conference was entrenched.

When the first meeting of the Cape Conference Executive committee convened in 1936, there is no tipping of the hat to the past; no mention of the severance of a section of the pre-depression Cape Conference; no acknowledgement of a parallel organization operating within the same territory. The first action taken by the new Cape Conference was “[t]hat Brother C. S. Pike be asked to fill the position of field

¹⁴¹ Thompson, R. C. L., 177.

¹⁴² SAUC Session Minutes, 17th Session, March 1937, 310.

Missionary Secretary.”¹⁴³ It was as though a Coloured community within the Cape Conference had never existed – as though a pebble had been thrown into the ocean and its existence (or disappearance) not even known.

The first mention of the existence of the Cape Field came in a minute discussing the allocation of territory for the collection of funds for welfare programmes, called the Harvest Ingathering Appeal.¹⁴⁴ It was business as usual, with the Cape Conference relating to the Cape Field as an autonomous body in no way linked to the Cape Conference. The irony of the two organizations occupying the same territory separated due to race – which gave rise to the discussion with regard to the allocation of Harvest Ingathering territory – seemed to be lost on the members of the committee at that meeting and in subsequent years. Where was the discussion by the members of the committee of finding ways to work together? Where were the deliberations of how to consolidate the work of the Church under one organization? Where was the expression of regret that the body of Christ had become formally separated because of race? The minutes are deafeningly silent on these issues.

With the formation of the Good Hope Conference twenty-seven years later, the option of the Cape Conference assimilating its former members was not part of the discussion by either the Division or the Union. On the contrary, the action taken by the Cape Conference with regard to the formation of the new Good Hope Conference reads thus:

¹⁴³ CC1/1/36.

¹⁴⁴ CC177/52/36

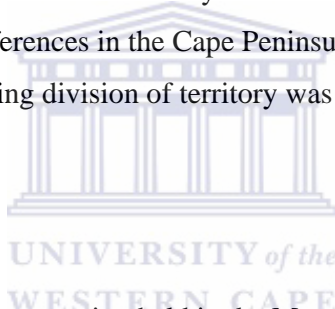
WHEREAS the delegates at this session of the Cape Conference have learned with great pleasure of the formation of the Good Hope Conference, it was

VOTED to convey to our new sister conference within the South African Union Conference our fervent and sincere good wishes and to pledge our hearty co-operation in the salvation of souls and the finishing of God's work in this part of the world field.¹⁴⁵

Apart from the action recorded above, the first action taken by the Cape Conference with reference to the Good Hope Conference, is remarkably the same as that of the Cape Conference in relation to the Cape Field 27 years earlier:

WHEREAS a redistribution of territory for Harvest Ingathering between the two conferences in the Cape Peninsula had become necessary, the following division of territory was discussed in detail, and it was

VOTED ...¹⁴⁶



This action was taken at a joint meeting held in the Mowbray church in Bollihope Crescent on the 21st of January, 1961. The vote taken at that meeting was not the end of the Harvest Ingathering saga. At a meeting of the Cape Conference held 18 months later, the following is recorded:

In view of the infringement of Ingathering territories in the Peninsula during the current campaign,
VOTED that the matter be laid before the Union with the request that arrangements be made for a meeting of representatives of the Cape Conference and Good Hope Conference, under the chairmanship of a Union representative, to explore this problem and

¹⁴⁵ CC 11/5/60

¹⁴⁶ CC493/183/61

endeavour to find a practical solution to the implementation of the existing organizational arrangements.¹⁴⁷

The Cape Conference requested the SAUC to mediate between the two conferences to find a “practical solution to the implementation of the existing organizational arrangements.” This appears to be a reasonable request. However, as with the Cape Field/Cape Conference relationship, the question needs to be posed as to why there was not appeal to examine the “existing organizational arrangements” per se? The action raises the practical implications of two organizations of the same Church managing different congregations within the same geographical territory based on race. These practicalities were to continue to plague the different organizations operating within the Cape area of South Africa until the merger culminating in the formation of the new Cape Conference in 2006. A further reading of the minutes indicates the division of territory between the Good Hope Conference and the Cape Conference. As it was considered pragmatic and desirable for Whites to collect in White areas and Coloureds to collect in Coloured areas, the boundaries were drawn up in this manner: when it came to the business and industrial communities, the Good Hope Conference was confined to a restricted area, while the Cape Conference was given a large area in the more affluent and prosperous business communities of the Cape area.¹⁴⁸

Despite actions such as the above being taken, there was recognition on the part of the Cape Conference that the multi-organizational structure within the Cape area was racially based. An action taken in 1962 reflects this.

¹⁴⁷ CC164/75/62

¹⁴⁸ In fact, this had already been dealt with by the SAUC in 1950, but still appeared to be a bone of contention. See SAUC 4573/1950.

In the interests of *racial harmony* and the development of the work of the Good Hope Conference,
VOTED that we offer to the Good Hope Conference the services of A. E. Cook for one meeting per week for the Coloured community of Cape Town (while running his evangelistic programme for our conference), and that we ask them to provide the budget and the team of workers and care for the expenses connected with the hosting of such meetings (emphasis supplied).¹⁴⁹

The preamble to the action necessitates the assumption that “racial harmony” either did not exist, or that efforts had to be intensified to increase “racial harmony” between the two groups. As alluded to on page 161, the irony of the churches membership with the South African Institute of Race Relations while perpetuating and justifying separation based on race cannot be overlooked. The Cape Conference executive committee minutes reflects the confirmation of the SAUC action for the Cape Conference employee, Pastor D. M. Baird to serve as a representative to the meetings of the SAIRR which was held in Port Elizabeth from January 16-19, 1962.¹⁵⁰

An anomaly exists between participation in an organization such as the SAIRR whose objective it was to create opportunities for cooperation and goodwill between the different races of South Africa¹⁵¹ and the continuation of racial discrimination. An illustration of the racial nature of the different organizational structures can be seen in the constitutions of the Good Hope Conference and the Cape Conference. The 1970 GHC and the 1974 CC constitutions are used to demonstrate this:

¹⁴⁹ CC39/30/62

¹⁵⁰ CC64/34/62

¹⁵¹ See page 161.

Good Hope Conference Constitution

Article II Object

The object of the Conference is to carry the everlasting gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to all people, *particularly those of Coloured race*, within its territory, and to assist in spreading the Advent message to all nations of the world (emphasis supplied).

Cape Conference Constitution

Article II

The object of the Conference is to carry the everlasting Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to all people *of the European race* within its territory and to assist in spreading the Advent message to all nations of the world (emphasis supplied).

Article III in both constitutions goes on to describe the territories. With reference to the Cape Province it included the same territory covered by both conferences. The Good Hope Conference territory went beyond the boundaries of the Cape Province to include “such portions of the Republic of South Africa and Swaziland where members of the Coloured race reside.”

In 1976, the Cape Conference sets out its objectives under the following categories:

1. Evangelism
2. Laity
3. Public Relations
4. Ministerial Enrichment
5. Literature Evangelism

A notable absence from the '76 objectives of the Conference is that there is no mention of race relations. Nothing is included in any of above to encourage contact with members/colleagues of the sister conferences in same territory.

However, despite the silence of the 1976 objectives with regard to race relations, the Cape Conference no doubt recognized the racial overtones of its organization and its constitution. The 1977 constitution renders Article II in this amended form:

Article II

The object of the Conference is to carry the everlasting Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to all people within its territory and to assist in spreading the Advent message to all nations of the world.

Notably the words “of the European race” that appeared in the 1974 constitution were expunged.



This was followed by an action taken on April 20, 1977, almost one hundred years after the establishment of the SDA Church in South Africa, to “set up a study group to give study to the matter of race relations effecting a closer co-operation between the CC and GHC”¹⁵² The areas for discussion were to be:

1. School enrolment
2. Transfer of membership
3. Five Day Plan attendants (all races)
4. Better Living Work
5. Advisability of administrative merges
6. Effect on conventions (Youth and Welfare Camps, etc)

¹⁵² CC923/259/77

7. Question of History of separate Churches and Conferences and any agreements made in the past in this regard
8. A study of this matter in relation to principles of mission and church growth.¹⁵³

This is the first action found in the minutes of the Cape Conference indicating the need to effect a closer working relationship with its sister organization, the Good Hope Conference. Items 5 and 7 intimate the thinking of the committee that the issue of possible dismantling of the racially based organizational structure needed to be investigated.

This was a radical paradigm shift from the pattern that had emerged from the early 1900's from which time separation had been implemented and rationalized by the leadership of the Division, Union and Conference. Further developments in this regard will be discussed in the next chapter.

Before proceeding to the fuller discussion with regard to the Good Hope Conference and its later disbandment, the question needs to be posed with regard to the Cape Field and the subsequent Good Hope Conference: when the Union president presented the item to the floor of the Cape Field Session, was there any discussion amongst the delegates with regard to exploring the option of disbanding the Field and rejoining the Cape Conference? The minutes remain silent on this.

However, an examination of the developments post the formation of the GHC

¹⁵³ Ibid. Members appointed to that committee were A. E. Birch, W. H. Böhme, M. P. Breedt, H. S. de Beer, P. C. Hurter, A. F. Jeffes, H. E. Marais, P. J. Retief, H. P. Swanson, J. G. Taylor, P. P. van Eck, A. G. van Wyk, E. C. Webster, W. S. J. van Heerden. From the SAUC: E Armer, K G Webster.

indicates strongly that this would not have been part of the thinking of the Church, both regionally and nationally.

The country was in the throes of being exposed to the harsh reality of a post-1948 Nationalist government; the effects of the Population Registration Act, the Group Areas Act and other discriminatory legislation were taking its toll. This would no doubt have an impact upon the membership and leadership of the Church. How this influenced the actions of the Church will be further discussed in the next chapter.



CHAPTER FIVE

ORGANIZATIONAL PHASE FOUR:

FROM GOOD HOPE CONFERENCE TO SOUTHERN HOPE CONFERENCE

The Good Hope Conference, organized in December 1959, developed at a steady rate. Under Coloured leadership, it appeared to be fulfilling one of the objectives enunciated by the SAUC action of 1930 as the motivation for setting up a separate organization for the Coloured membership of the Church in South Africa: this was to encourage the growth of the Church amongst the Coloured members.



The organization expanded, with the administration taking responsibility for the operations of the Church amongst the Coloured community from Cape Town to the Limpopo River. St Helena, in the Atlantic, was included in the territory.

The training institution for the Coloured community, Good Hope Training School, which operated as a Union institution, also experienced growth, moving from Athlone to the farm *Vorentoe* in Kuils River at the beginning of 1963.⁶⁷⁷ This was done because of the perception that the encroaching urbanization of the Athlone area diluted the philosophical approach encapsulated in Seventh-day Adventist education that advocated that the institutions should be located in a rural setting. With the move the name changed to Good Hope College, with the

⁶⁷⁷ Du Preez and Du Pré, *A Century of Good Hope*, vol. 1, 88 – 89, 93.

primary school subsequently established on the old campus at Athlone becoming Riverside Primary School.⁶⁷⁸

Responses to Continued Segregation

The continued operation under a segregated Church organization drew a variety of reactions from its constituency, with some individuals believing that a separate organization was favourable in ensuring the development and growth of the work amongst the Coloured community.

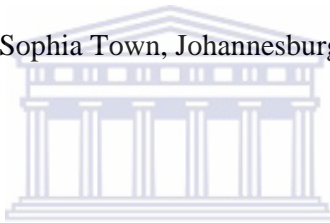
Those holding to this view believed that the policy of separation within the wider community and the Church was defensible and justifiable. The order of things which had existed in South Africa for over 300 years by the time the Good Hope Conference was formed had become entrenched in their thinking to the point where it had become the “natural order of things.”

The tripartite structure was here to stay and was comfortable: The Whites remained the “baas” while the Blacks – through an effective divide-and-rule strategy over the years – had assumed the position of the inferior class destined to occupy the lowest socio-economic strata. The Coloureds – especially in the Western Cape – occupied a ‘safe’ position somewhere between the Whites and the Blacks. The Coloured Labour Preferential Act protected the Coloureds in the Western Cape from competition from the Black labour force. The residential areas, though not always acceptable, were a step or two higher on the social, economic and aesthetic scale than the areas such as Langa, Nyanga, Guguletu and Crossroads.

⁶⁷⁸ Ibid., 93.

A strange phenomenon developed amongst the Coloured community where the expression could sometimes be heard: “The White man is good to us.” Thus a relationship of ‘philanthropic domination’ developed similar to that of a wife suffering in an abusive relationship, but being grateful for the weekly allowance she receives. This, despite the sequence of forced removals which followed the promulgation of the Group Areas Act in 1950.

Over a 3,5 million⁶⁷⁹ were affected by forced removals – often from homes which they and their families had occupied for generations – culminating in magnitude and symbolic significance by the razing of District Six in Cape Town in 1968. Similar removals of entire communities played itself out in Sophia Town, Johannesburg, Cato Ridge, Durban and South End, Port Elizabeth.⁶⁸⁰



While separation of churches had taken place due to decisions made by different Conferences and the South African Union, congregations were now placed in the position where they had to sell their buildings as their churches found themselves in re-declared areas. Because the members were forced to relocate far from the premises where they had lived and worshiped for years, congregations such as Beaconsfield, George, Elsie's River, Wynberg, Paarl, Fairview, Albertville, and Claremont found themselves falling prey to these developments – having to sell in order to build closer to where the members were now living.⁶⁸¹

⁶⁷⁹ <http://www.info.gov.za/aboutsa/history.htm#Apartheid> [September, 2009].

⁶⁸⁰ See Agherdien, Ambrose and Hendricks. *South End As We Knew It*.

⁶⁸¹ GHC280/80/65; GHC269/77/65; GHC285/81/65; GHC291/81/65; GHC264/76/67; GHC233/85/68; GHC354/116/69

Thus, despite these removals and the plethora of other separatist and segregationist regulations which sought to dehumanize the majority of the population of South Africa, there were those amongst the Coloured community who accepted and rationalized these phenomena.

Other segments of the Coloured community, however, resented the presence, practice and policy of separation found within the country and especially the Church. While remaining loyal to the organization and, at times, even serving as employees of the Church, the status quo which had developed in the Church proved to be a source of frustration and bitterness.

Particularly amongst the employees of the Church, this distinction was evident: those who chose to speak out against the injustices and those who chose not to rock the boat.

Instances are recorded of those who chose to speak up having been intimidated and even threatened by the administrators of the field and conference.⁶⁸² This had already been practiced prior to the establishment of the Good Hope Conference. Dr I. F. du Preez recounted to the researcher of how at a particular meeting of the Cape Field executive committee meeting he had raised the issue of disparity in salaries between persons with similar qualifications and experience. The meeting was temporarily adjourned and the chairman invited him to step out of the meeting. The chairman then remonstrated with him, indicating that the Coloureds on the committee were there just to sit and listen. He was warned never again to speak on the committee.

Appendix VI (D) recounts the story of K. Landers and A. G. Kohen and their act of “defiance” by photographing a sign outside a White camp meeting – “No Dogs and Coloureds Allowed.” Their different responses to the sanctions imposed on them for the actions and the resultant

⁶⁸² Du Preez and Du Pré, *A Century of Good Hope*, vol. II, 40 – 42.

outcome illustrate the dissimilar ways employees chose to respond to attempts to silence them. However, despite the efforts to maintain the status quo at all costs, the frustration and bitterness simmered beneath the surface.

It was this frustration and bitterness which give rise to the agitation which ultimately led to the dissolution of the Good Hope Conference on 13 September, 1997. Arising from this was the merger with the Southern Conference to form the Southern Hope Conference. Thus sixty four years of a segregated organization catering exclusively for the Coloured community in the South African Seventh-day Adventist Church ended. The process came full circle for the Coloured community in the Cape region on March 19, 2006, when the Southern Hope Conference and the Cape Conference merged to form the (new) Cape Conference. This merger meant that the situation of a single administrative unit overseeing the work of the White, Black and Coloured constituency in the Cape area as had been present with the commencement of the operations of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa in 1887 was reverted to.

The 1997 merger between the Southern Conference and the Good Hope Conference to form the Southern Hope Conference came twelve years after the repeal of the Mixed Marriages Act and the Immorality Act. It came more than seven and a half years after the release of Mandela from prison and the unbanning of the ANC and other organizations. It came more than seven years after the repeal of the Groups Areas Act and the Separate Amenities Act. It came seven years after the merger of the Southern Union and the South African Union to form the Southern Africa Union – a single national body to oversee the work of the SDA Church in South Africa. It came almost six years after the first sitting of CODESA in which 92 organizations in South Africa came together to map the way forward to the setting up of a

democratically elected government and the final scrapping of *Apartheid*.⁶⁸³ It came three and a half years after the first democratic elections in South Africa in April, 1994.

The question needs to be asked as to why the scrapping of separate Church organizations in South Africa based on race took so long. Was it for financial and economic reasons? Was it for Church Growth and Missiological reasons? Was it that the wheels of bureaucracy turned slowly and that, despite a will to change, the process just took long? Was it because of recalcitrance on the part of the rank and file membership, the local leadership, or the higher organizations to change and realign the distribution of power and authority? Or was it because of racism within the Church?

The first indication of the recognition of the need to dismantle separate organizations in the Cape emerges in 1975. It was at this time that an action is recorded in Cape Conference EXCOM minutes with reference to the SAUC Inter-Union Standing Committee.⁶⁸⁴ This was followed up by the 1977 action taken by the Cape Conference to set up a study group to discuss closer cooperation between itself and the Good Hope Conference.⁶⁸⁵

After years of separation, a change in thinking appeared to manifest itself in the leadership of the Church. What were the factors that precipitated this change? While the motives and thinking processes of individuals and committees cannot always be reliably ascertained, this study recognizes and postulates that the socio-economic-political milieu must be factored in when attempting to understand the different developments within the history of the Church.

Socio-Political and Church Developments in the 1950's and 60's

⁶⁸³ <http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/governance-projects/constitution/codesa.htm> [October, 2009]

⁶⁸⁴ CC 274/70/75

⁶⁸⁵ CC923/259/77

After the victory by the National Party at the polls of 1948, the machinery of *Apartheid* ground into action. A series of laws were promulgated, each one designed to emasculate the Non-White communities of South Africa. Between 1948 and 1970, the following events that were dramatically and traumatically to impact upon the lives of millions of the residents of South Africa transpired:

1948	National Party wins General Election;
1949	ANC Youth League produces 'Programme of Action'; African and Indian conflict in Durban; Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act forbids marriage across colour or ethnic lines
1950	Race Classification introduced; Population Registration Act; Immorality Act; Group Areas Act; Suppression of Communism Act; Nelson Mandela leads ANC civil disobedience campaign
1951	Bantu Authorities Act; Separate Representation of Voters' Act transfers Coloureds to a separate voters' roll in the Cape (no Non-Whites were on any voters' roll in any of the other provinces)
1952	Abolition of Passes and Coordination of Documents Act extends pass laws; ANC launches 'Defiance Campaign'
1953	Separate Amenities Act; Bantu Education Act; Criminal Law Amendment Act
1953 – 4	Resistance to destruction of Sophiatown
1955	Native (Urban Areas) Amendment Act extends urban influx control; National Congress of the People adopts 'Freedom Charter'
1956	Coloureds removed from Cape common franchise; Mass demonstration of women against pass laws; Mines and Works Act formalises racial discrimination in employment; Natives Act denies Blacks the right of appeal against enforced removal; Mandela charged with high treason (charges dropped)

1956 – 61	Treason trial
1956 – 7	Rural revolts in Transvaal and Free State
1957	Alexandra bus boycotts; Native Laws Amendment Act 'Church Clause' allows for the expulsion of Blacks from White church services
1958	Coloureds first election on separate voters' roll
1959	Foundation of Pan Africanist Congress (PAC); Promotion of Bantu Self-Governing Act sets up ethnic 'homelands'; Establishment of Union Council for Coloured Affairs
1960	March 21 – Sharpeville shootings and State of Emergency;
1960	Banning of ANC, Communist Party and PAC; Pondoland revolt; South Africa excluded from Olympic Games
1961	Umkhonto we Sizwe guerrilla movement founded; Poqo revolt; South African leaves Commonwealth and becomes a Republic; Indemnity Act relieves all government official of any responsibility for the Sharpeville massacres; South African rand replaces South African £ at 2/1; Mandela heads ANC's new military wing, launching sabotage campaign; Robben Island becomes penal colony
1962	Sabotage Act allows for house arrest and banning not subject to challenge in courts
1963	General Laws Amendment Act permit detention without trial; Transkei holds first election
1964	Rivonia trials sentence ANC leaders to life imprisonment; Black Labour Act tightens influx control; First Act to establish CRC; Federal Party formed
1966	Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd assassinated; Labour Party officially formed
1967	Terrorism Act allows for indefinite detention without trial;
1968	UN renames South West Africa as Namibia; Revised Act to

	establish CRC; Four White MPs representing Coloureds removed from parliament; Coloureds prohibited from belonging to White political parties
1969	Foundation of South African Students' Organisation (SASO) under Biko; First CRC election
1970	Bantu Homelands Act forcibly resettles more than 3 million Blacks in homelands and compels them to become citizens of same ⁶⁸⁶

Table 1
Political Developments 1948 -- 1970

By the time of the formation of the Good Hope Conference, the foundation and the building blocks of the *Apartheid* laws were in place. The Population Registration Act 50 of 1950 had achieved its purpose of ensuring that all citizens were categorized by race; the Group Areas Act (1950) and the Separate Amenities Act (1953) demarcated where people could live, work, play, die and be buried. It even determined which ambulance could assist you in the event of an accident.

During 1953 the national structure in the Church was formally separated into the South African Union Conference and the Southern Union Mission Conference.⁶⁸⁷ This structure delegated to the SAUC the oversight of the White, Coloured and Indian Churches while the SU was to manage the Black Church in Southern Africa. As noted above, this action by the Church came 3 years after the implementation of the Population Registration Act and the same year as the Separate Amenities Act. This came six years before the Promotion of Bantu Self-Governing Act which set up the ethnically based independent homelands for Blacks.

⁶⁸⁶ See Appendix III.

⁶⁸⁷ As referred to in this study, this was the fourth configuration for the national structure of the Church in South Africa: single union; two unions; single union with Group I and Group II; two unions. It would undergo one more change with the merger of the two unions in 1991 to form a single union once again.

Within the Division, a quaint – if not cynical – system was developed in order to distinguish between the White and Black sections of the work: The White section was referred to as “Section 1” and the Black work as “Section 2”. This was carried into the numbering of the minutes of the various organizations with a “1” and “2” respectively prefacing the action number. The distinction between the two groups was further entrenched by an action which – ironically – dictated the colour paper on which the minutes were to be recorded on:

That the minutes of Section 2 Workers Committees be further identified by placing the figure “2” before the identifying number of the minute as suggested above, thus: 2/516/253; that the regular Union Committee minutes be printed on white paper and that the Section 2 Workers Committee minutes be printed on a coloured paper.⁶⁸⁸

Another action which emphasises the continued entrenchment of separation was taken with regard to Helderberg College where it was voted by the Cape Conference

. . . that we record Union Action No. 1/388/95 and Division Action No. 92 as follows:

‘Helderberg College is owned and controlled by the Southern African Division. It is recognized as the Senior College for the training of European young people in the Union of South Africa and other territories of the Southern African Division. . . .’⁶⁸⁹

It is significant to note that at a time when the political system operating within the country sought to strengthen and consolidate the separation between the races under the ideology of *Apartheid*, the Church consolidates and reinforces its practice and policy of separation. No overt or covert action or attempt is made to remove practices which entrench the divide between the races. Various actions recognize and acknowledge the tension that existed. However, these actions examine ways of operating within this tension – not at ways of

⁶⁸⁸ SAUC J/265/103.

⁶⁸⁹ CC 86/44/56

removing them. An example of this is found in an action taken at a meeting of the Cape Conference Executive committee which was attended by the Union President on the 6th of September, 1956. The following is recorded:

The desirability of holding an interracial meeting in the Peninsula to coincide with the visit of Pastor E. W. Dunbar was discussed at length. When put to the vote the result was so close that it was agreed that the matter should be referred to the Cape Peninsula Elders' Association for further study.⁶⁹⁰

It is noteworthy that a meeting of the leadership of the Conference, with the Union President in attendance, consensus could not be arrived at with regard to the suitability of an "interracial meeting." This was not an action that called for a merger between the Conference and the Cape Field; this was not an action seeking to achieve an ongoing relationship between the Church employees from the various sectors of the territory; this was not an attempt to open churches to all races. It was simply to consider the "desirability" of an interracial meeting. The leadership chose to leave the matter unresolved and to refer it to the lay leadership of the Church in the Cape Peninsula Elders' Association. No record is found as to whether the "interracial meeting" was ever conducted. As will be seen later, the question of whether it would be allowed by the law or not was not an issue.

In 1957 the Native Laws Amendment Act was passed. It contained a clause prohibiting Natives from attending church services in White areas.⁶⁹¹ Due to protests from a number of churches, including the Dutch Reformed Church, the law was not strictly enforced.⁶⁹² No

⁶⁹⁰ CC Minutes, 6 September, 1956.

⁶⁹¹ *The Story of Africa* in <http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/12chapter7.shtml> states it thus: "In 1957, the Native Laws Amendment Act contained a 'Church Clause' which allowed Africans to be barred from a service if they were considered to be 'causing a nuisance'" [October, 2009].

⁶⁹² The Rt. Rev. Ambrose Reeves. *State and Church In South Africa*. From "Notes and Documents", No. 9/72, March 1972. <http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/misc/reeves12.html> [October, 2009].

record is found of protests or representation by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This is not surprising, as the process of separating churches and church structures based on colour, as discussed earlier, had been introduced many years prior to the 1957 Act. Some observers state it was in the churches that a measure of cross-racial interaction took place – as was also the case of nightclubs where drug dealing and prostitution was common!⁶⁹³ However, this observation does not include the Seventh-day Adventist Church, as the opportunity for cross-racial interaction had been well-nigh obliterated by this time with organizational structures on national and regional level racially composed; educational facilities were racially structured; salary scales were racially differentiated; employment and leadership opportunities were racially allocated.

Some could argue that it was the 1957 act that necessitated and justified the continuation of separate churches and separate organizations. However, as stated above, it was not strictly enforced and some churches continued allowing persons of all races to attend the church of their choice and to hold positions regardless of colour. An example of this is the Methodist Church that, in 1958, when “[f]aced by strong government pressure to divide along racial lines, [declared] ‘its conviction that it is the will of God for the Methodist Church that it should be one and undivided, trusting to the leading of God to bring this ideal to ultimate fruition’”.⁶⁹⁴ No such statement was forthcoming from the SDA Church. By 1964, the Methodists had appointed a Black national leader. The first SDA Black national leader was appointed at the end of 1991.

⁶⁹³ http://www.capetown.at/heritage/history/apart_petty.htm [October, 2009]. Hopefully, the “commonness” did not extend to the “drug dealing and prostitution”!

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid., <http://www.methodist.org.za/history> [October, 2009].

Can Themba, a reporter with the Black magazine, *Drum*, set out in the 1950's to test the response of churches to the encroaching apartheid legislation.⁶⁹⁵ He visited different churches in White areas in Johannesburg. The reception he received was 'up and down.' The Presbyterian Church in Noord Street allowed him entrance, yet the same denomination in Orange Grove refused him permission to worship there. The Dutch Reformed Church in Kensington violently shoved him out and drove him away. The Baptist Church, also in Kensington, offered him a hymnbook and invited him to sit through the service.⁶⁹⁶ Upon entering the Central Seventh-day Adventist Church in Claim Street in 1956, he was forcibly removed and shoved down the stairs into a police vehicle. His accomplice, a photographer by the name of Jürgen Schadeberg, captured this unfortunate act on camera – and for his efforts, he was chased through the streets.⁶⁹⁷

While not as dramatic as the Can Themba saga, similar incidents played itself out in other Seventh-day Adventist churches around the country. Persons of colour were politely – and sometimes not so politely – shown the door and instructed that “their” church was in another part of town.⁶⁹⁸ Thus, while it can be argued the law was on the statute books – albeit not strictly enforced by the security forces – it appears as though the church communities – including the Seventh-day Adventist Church – applied the law somewhat erratically and inconsistently.

⁶⁹⁵ *The Story of Southern Africa*,

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/12chapter7.shtml> [October, 2009].

⁶⁹⁶ Can Themba, *The Will to Die*. Cape Town: David Philip, 1985, p. 74-77.

⁶⁹⁷ Christopher Edmond Merrett. *A Culture of Censorship: Secrecy and Intellectual Repression in South Africa*, 38.

⁶⁹⁸ Du Preez and Du Pré, *A Century of Good Hope*, vol. 1, 5; vol. 2, 42.

In the same year as the promulgation of the law which set up the ethnic ‘independent homelands’⁶⁹⁹ as well as the establishment of the Union Council for Coloured Affairs – 1959,⁷⁰⁰ the SAUC grants “self-government” to the Coloured Church. This was effected through the formation of the Good Hope Conference in December of 1959.

It is difficult to understand how the community of faith-based groups in South Africa applied what could be seen as a practice that went against the basic tenets of their faith. However, cognisance needs to be taken of the fact that a progressive process of reinforcing the concept of the superiority of the White race in relation to all other races had become part of the fabric of South African society since the invasion by the colonists in 1652. It was an ideology that had been subsumed into the thinking of the South African population and had been supported by laws and decrees of successive governments. These laws had been intensified following the rise of the National Party to power in 1948 where it approached the level of draconianism. This, however, does not justify or give reason to condone the action of churches in promoting and enforcing separation. What it did do in the minds of some leaders was to create a situation in which racism was consciously and sub-consciously practiced to the point where later generations would “innocently” declare, “But the Church never practiced racism.”⁷⁰¹

⁶⁹⁹ *Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act, No 46 of 1959*. “This Act entrenched the government’s policy of separate development as it provided the political and geographic shape of South Africa. This map saw South Africa as a White center with a cluster Black states along its borders. The principle of ethnicity became established in law. The introduction to the Act read: ‘The Bantu people of the Union of South Africa do not constitute a homogenous people but form separate national units on the basis of language and culture.’ The government justified its obviously racist policy on the grounds that South Africa was made up of different ‘nations’: ‘The government’s policy is, therefore, not a policy of discrimination on the grounds of race or colour, but a policy of differentiation on the ground of nationhood, of different nations, granting to each self-determination within the borders of their homelands - hence this policy of separate development’ (Chairperson of the Bantu Affairs Commission, 1968).” <http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/chronology/thisday/bantu-selfgovernment-act.htm> [October, 2009].

⁷⁰⁰ Aletta J. Norval. *The Deconstructing Apartheid Discourse*, London: Verso Publishers, 1996, p. 336. See also Hyman R. Shevelew, *Marginality and the Cape Colored People* in *Africa Today*, Vol. 16, No. 4, Zambia, Barotseland, and the Liberation of Southern Africa (Aug. - Sep., 1969), pp. 5-8. Published by: [Indiana University Press](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4185019). Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4185019>. [October, 2009].

⁷⁰¹ See footnote 100, p 32.

“Unity between European and African Workers”

This was recognized by the wider Church. An action was taken by the Division and adopted by the Union in 1961 which was subsequently recorded by the Cape Conference in an action in January 1962 entitled “Unity between European and African Workers.”⁷⁰² In this action, recognition is given to the fact that “[t]his is the time above all others when the closest understanding and confidence should prevail between all races within the Church.” The statement goes on to state that “[t]here are aspects of the African situation beyond our control but there are areas in which care and thought could contribute much.” The Church is encouraged, not to just proclaim these principles, but that it be “demonstrated and exemplified.”



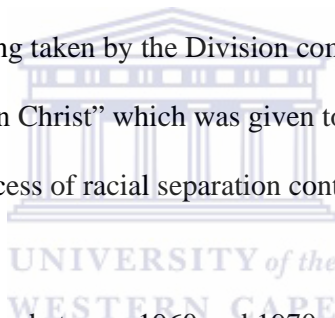
Eight items are listed in the action which are intended to assist the “missionaries and conference workers” in demonstrating and exemplifying the spiritual unity which should be between themselves and their “fellow-workers and members of all races.” These are summarized as follows:

1. The cross of Christ clothes all men, saved and unsaved, with heavenly dignity and value
2. Treatment of persons of other races as different and in a patronizing and condescending manner is “not according to Christ”
3. Africans must be equipped for leadership in the Church
4. Recognition must be given to the fact that Africans would be placed in leadership positions over Whites in the near future

⁷⁰² SAUC S1/1158/315/61, CC 132/55/62. See Appendix VII.

5. Africans need to be respected and honoured, especially the senior and experienced African ministers
6. Repugnant phrases such as “natives”, “boy” and “girl” in reference to servants should be avoided. Children should be taught to be respectful to Africans at all times
7. Social contacts must be “judiciously encouraged” where it is not “difficult and awkward to either group”
8. Differences between ministers of the different races are not to be emphasized by use of “elder” in reference to one group and “pastor” to the other. Colour makes no difference in the ordination or standing of a Christian minister.

However, despite this action being taken by the Division committee and it being included in the manuscript “Ye are all One in Christ” which was given to new missionaries in the Division,⁷⁰³ the practice and process of racial separation continued during the '60's.



Legislation passed in South Africa between 1960 and 1970 sought to entrench the laws promulgated subsequent to the 1948 elections. What transpired during this decade were the intensification of forced removals and the harsh implementation of the earlier *Apartheid* laws. A watershed event was the Sharpeville massacre, in which 69 unarmed persons were killed in a peaceful demonstration against the pass law system on 21 March, 1960.⁷⁰⁴ On August 26 of that year, the government declared the first – of what was to be many – state of emergency in South Africa. Under this measure, meetings between more than three people were restricted; curfews were imposed; right of association was limited; human rights were violated in that the system of arrest without trial or representation was instituted.⁷⁰⁵ As with other events of political and social significance, no reference is made in the records of the Church of this

⁷⁰³ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁴ <http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/chronology/thisday/1960-08-26.htm> [October, 2009].

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid.

event. No attempt is made at addressing these issues with the government. No attempt is made to seek to have the violation of human rights against its own members addressed.

At a time when:

- the *Umkhonto we Sizwe* guerrilla movement was founded
- the Poqo revolt transpired
- Indemnity Act relieved all government official of any responsibility for the Sharpeville massacres
- Mandela headed ANC's new military wing, launching sabotage campaign
- Robben Island became penal colony
- The Sabotage Act allowed for house arrest and banning not subject to challenge in courts⁷⁰⁶

the 45th Session of the Cape Conference convened, January 2 – 4, 1962.



At the commencement of this Session, a greeting is formulated and voted:

Believing that all men *regardless of race or colour are all one in Christ Jesus*, we, the delegates assembled in this session, wish to reiterate that we adhere to this Bible principle and take this opportunity of sending our sincere Christian greetings to our fellow believers in our sister conferences and fields, at the same time assuring them of our continued prayer for and interest in the growth of their work (emphasis supplied).⁷⁰⁷

No resolution is passed recognizing the turmoil that was being experienced in the country; no outrage and the erosion of human rights; no solidarity with those who had been affected by the draconian laws.

⁷⁰⁶ See Appendix III.

⁷⁰⁷ CC 20/13/62

A possible allusion is made in the later Cape Conference Executive Committee action of 1962 in which reference is made to the fact that we live in a

continent rife with racial hate and rent by strife and division, in an atmosphere charged with suspicion and mistrust, and while gross darkness descends upon men, the message of the church in regard to relations of man with man is to be clearer than ever.⁷⁰⁸

How this “message” was to be “clearer,” apart from the eight items which followed the above in the 1962 resolution, is vague. As in the ’50’s, no action is found in the Division, Union or Cape Conference minutes that indicate an attempt to ameliorate the situation with regard to race relations. Thus the 1962 Cape Conference statement adopted from the SAUC and SAD appears to have been given no more than lip service during the remainder of that decade.

In the mean time the Good Hope Conference and the Cape Conference continued to operate alongside each other in the territory of the Cape Province – one organizational unit catering for Coloureds and Indians and the other catering for Whites. The same situation existed in the Transvaal, Natal and Orange Free State provinces – separate organizations for the different race groups.

The shift in focus during the ’70’s and ’80’s

The 1970’s and ’80’s witnessed a significant increase in protest and agitation against the policies of *Apartheid* in the political arena. Some of these events were:

1971	Establishment of Black People’s Convention (BPC); Black Homeland Citizenship Act changes the status of homeland inhabitants, robbing them of South African citizenship
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⁷⁰⁸ CC 132/55/62

1972	Coloureds eliminated from municipal politics
1973 – 5	Widespread African strikes in Natal and eastern Cape
1975	Foundation of Inkatha under Buthelezi
1976	Revolt in Soweto and other townships;
1977	Detention and murder of Biko; Banning of Black Consciousness organisations; UN institutes arms embargo against South Africa
1976 – 81	Nominal independence of homelands: Transkei (1976), Bophuthatswana (1977), Venda (1979), Ciskei (1981)
1978	PW Botha introduces ‘total strategy’ policy; Foundation of Azanian People’s Organisation (AZAPO);
1979	Carlton Conference meeting of government and business leaders; Riekert Commission recommends easing of job colour bar; Wiehahn Commission recommends recognition of African trade unions; CRC sessions terminated
1980	CRC disbanded
1982	Formation of Conservative Party under Treurnicht; Black Local Authorities Act extends Community Council powers in townships
1983	Foundation of National Forum (NF) and United Democratic Front (UDF)
1984	Elections under new tricameral constitution widely boycotted by Indian and Coloured voters; Township revolt begins; Government declares state of emergency;
1984 – 6	Widespread resistance; State of Emergency and troops moved into townships
1985	Foundation of Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU); International bank loans called in and sanctions intensified; Uitenhage shootings; National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) calls for ‘People’s Education’; Conflict

	in Inanda (Natal)
1986	Repeal of pass laws; Commonwealth delegation visit aborted by South African raids on neighbouring countries;
1986 – 9	Widespread conflict between Inkatha and UDF in Natal
1988	KwaNdebele resistance to ‘independence’
1989	Botha replaced by FW de Klerk; Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) launches civil disobedience campaign; Public facilities desegregated; Many ANC activists freed ⁷⁰⁹

Table 2
Political Developments 1971 – 1989

Between 1973 and 1976 a wave of political consciousness and activity spread across the country, with widespread riots in Natal and the Eastern Cape. The unrest reached a pivotal point on June 16, 1976, with the youth of Soweto rising up against the policies of the government, the catalyst being the enforcement of the teaching of Afrikaans in Black schools. The unrest soon spread to the rest of the country, gaining a momentum that would not abate despite the harsh crackdown by government security forces and the declaring of successive states of emergency.

These had an effect on the thinking of members of the Church – those in leadership included as they were confronted with a sensitised and politically savvy younger generation.

From the early to mid '70's the compliant and submissive older generation that had tolerated separation in the Church was replaced with a militant, enquiring and persistent cohort of university educated, sophisticated and impatient youth. Younger members of the Church were

⁷⁰⁹ See Appendix III.

being exposed to the burning issues of the day in the schools, in the universities and on the streets. As in the political realm, where the younger generation were accusing the older folk of being too compliant and submissive towards the *Apartheid* regime, just so the youth within the Church were beginning to express discomfort at belonging to a Church that was openly racist in its structures and its practices.

They saw the separate but unequal educational facilities⁷¹⁰; they observed the skewed representation when it came to leadership positions within the Union, for while the SAUC represented Whites, Coloureds and Indians, it was only Whites that occupied positions in the Union office at Bloemfontein – even down to the secretaries and accountants.⁷¹¹ In the Southern Union Mission – the structure set up to oversee the work amongst the Black constituency – only Whites occupied the position of President and Treasurer.⁷¹² They noted that Good Hope College – set up to cater for the education of the Coloured community – had had White principals since its inception in 1929. Now, more than 45 years later, White principals still held the reins;⁷¹³ they questioned the same situation existing at Bethel College, the institution established for the Black constituency; they became aware of the disparity in salaries – the principle of equal pay for equal work with equal qualifications was not being applied. As in the political realm, it was the youth who said. “Enough is enough.”

Newsletters under the auspices of the Youth Department of the Good Hope Conference began circulating, raising the awareness of the constituency with regarding the issues of the racial

⁷¹⁰ Bethel, Good Hope and Helderberg Colleges still remained separate but unequal.

⁷¹¹ Pastor J. M. Niekerk was the first Non-White departmental director to serve at the SAUC (1980 – 1985). Pastor G. R. van Ster was appointed Executive Secretary in 1985. Du Preez and du Pré, *A Century of Good Hope*, vol. 1, 17.

⁷¹² Pastor P. M. Mabena became the first Black president in 1975. This was 14 years after the “Unity” statement of the Division and the SAUC in which it was recognized that Blacks should be prepared to be moved into positions of leadership. The first Non-White treasurer in the SU was Chris Scout in 1985.

⁷¹³ The first Non-White principal of Good Hope College was B. H. Parkerson who was appointed acting principal in 1976. I F du Preez, who was on study leave in the USA, had been appointed principal elect. Du Preez and Du Pré, *A Century of Good Hope*, vol. 1, 115.

nature of the Church. Prominent students in spearheading this project were Elroy Africa and Clifton Petersen.

Others began to advance the discussion. One of these was Roy du Preez, who, through the *Peninsula and Boland*⁷¹⁴ newsletter that later became the *Transmitter* – the official newspaper of the Good Hope Conference⁷¹⁵ – provided a forum for discussion on issues of separation in the Church. A paper introduced by a layman from the Eastern Cape, Stan Jaftha, called the *Voice*,⁷¹⁶ was not bound by the same constraints that the student's or the Peninsula and Boland paper had – both being produced under the auspices of the Conference – and was thus much more outspoken and critical of the *Apartheid* in the Church.

“Programme of Education”

By 1974 the increased awareness and pressure of the various forums found resonance in the Inter-Union Standing Committee whose report of September 11 1974 was adopted by Cape Conference in January of 1975.⁷¹⁷ Arising from the report, various decisions were taken which indicate the attempt made at addressing the divide between, firstly, the racially composed Unions and, secondly, the Conferences in the Cape Province. These included:

1. That there be an interchange of articles in the two Union papers, viz. the *Lantern* (SAUC) and the *Maranatha* (SU).⁷¹⁸ This action reflected the huge divide that existed between the two organizations as it indicated that, up to this point, the two

⁷¹⁴ This newsletter started up in 1969 when Du Preez worked as an intern under C. J. Theron. *A Century of Good Hope*, vol. 2, 80.

⁷¹⁵ This paper continued till 1997 until it was replaced by the *Southern Hope* under the Southern Hope Conference.

⁷¹⁶ Two young ministerial interns were correspondents to the *Voice* – P Randall Gelderbloem and Gerald T du Preez. They were both strongly cautioned by the Conference President, Pastor J M Niekerk, not to become involved in or be seen to be siding with what was considered a rebel publication.

⁷¹⁷ CC 274/70/75

⁷¹⁸ CC 276/70/75

organizations operated in such isolation from each other that the newspaper of the sister organizations were not even shared with each other.

2. Personnel of the SU were to be used by the conferences in the SAUC for camp meetings, congresses and local church meetings.⁷¹⁹ Again, the action indicates that the pulpits and convocations of the two organizations had been closed to personnel from the sister organizations in the same territory. Up to this point this was also the case between conferences within the SAUC, i.e. personnel from the GHC were not utilised by the CC while the reverse had always been present.
3. Joint institutes – that is various training programmes for lay leaders, pastors and teachers – were to be organized.⁷²⁰
4. Workers between the SU and SAUC in the same area were to contact one another “for fellowship and spiritual encouragement.”⁷²¹ A caveat to this action was that “the initiative to come mainly from the SAUC worker.” In adding this caveat, the implication could be that the approach was to come from the SAUC worker – who could be White, Coloured or Indian. These SAUC workers would need to make the approach to the SU worker – who would be Black. In the case of the SAUC worker in the Cape Conference this would be a White worker that would need to make the first move. Of its own, this might appear to be a positive gesture, but given the background of racial separation and the progressive alienation between the different groupings in South Africa in general and the Church in particular, it could be interpreted that, if the White worker chose not to take the initiative, no contact would take place. Alternatively, it could be reinforcing the South African social system that placed the White man in the position of authority, thereby negating the possibility of the Black man initiating contact.

⁷¹⁹ CC 277/71/75, CC 280/71/75

⁷²⁰ CC 278/71/75

⁷²¹ CC 279/71/75

Following the adoption of the report of the Inter-Union Standing Committee, the Cape Conference proceeded to outline a “programme of education” comprising eight “methods” that was to be instituted in order “pass on the principles of improving race relations.”⁷²² This followed the eight “important items” that needed to receive attention in 1962 in order to improve relationships between all races.⁷²³ The reader is left to speculate as to what transpired in the intervening thirteen years as no record is found of any programme to implement or monitor the eight “important items.” Furthermore, the question can be asked as to whether the eight “principles” would have been necessary if the eight “important items” had been followed.

The programme of education focused on:

1. Instruction to be given at workers’ meetings
2. Sermon material to be prepared by the respective unions
3. Bible/Baptismal Class materials to be prepared
4. Suitable articles to be published in the Church papers
5. The recognition of cultural differences and the need to treat one another with respect.
(Examples of “courteous behaviour” were to be listed)
6. The term ‘African’ was to be used rather than ‘Bantu’, and that other terminology that could cause offence be eliminated
7. A spirit of tolerance and patience be exercised to those “still developing in their Christian experience”

⁷²² CC 281/71/75

⁷²³ CC 135/55/62

8. “That information concerning the legal aspects of inter-racial contacts be made available.”⁷²⁴

With regard to attendance at churches of all races, the Cape Conference took the following action at the same EXCOM where the foregoing was adopted:

VOTED to recommend that after the church pastors have undergone the programme of education, the matter of church attendance of all races at any Seventh-day Adventist church in the SAUC be taken up with the church boards to formulate a local church policy.⁷²⁵

This above action was taken in spite of a policy statement being issued by the SAUC in which it declared that all congregations and institutions under its jurisdiction were open to worship and membership, including the holding of church posts.⁷²⁶ The minutes of the Cape Conference reveal a consistent trend – leadership being confronted with the need to take a principled decision defer to the local congregations. While within a certain context this might appear to be laudable and democratic, it might also reveal a latent fear of leadership of taking a definitive stand on racism. During the ensuing years, the actions of sessions and executive committees sing the same tune – we need to recognize the need of individual churches to make the decisions. The question is asked as to whether on matters of doctrine or Church policy the same line of argument would have been pursued. This trend is only observed on the issue of church unity and measures to remove racism within the Church. One of the key issues raised by the 2009 High Court Case lodged against the Union in opposing restructuring was the issue of the *locus standi* of the individual congregation. While of its own it is not intrinsically negative, the concept it promotes is the consistent cry that when it comes to the

⁷²⁴ CC 281/71/75

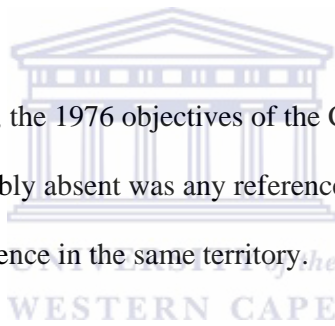
⁷²⁵ CC 282/71/75

⁷²⁶ Du Preez and Du Pré, *A Century of Good Hope*, vol. 1, 17.

dismantling the evil of *Apartheid* it does not become a matter of principle, but a matter on which the local church must be allowed to decide.

However flawed it might have been, the Cape Conference Executive Committee of January 15, 1975, under the chairmanship of A E Birch can be seen as a watershed for the Conference in that, for the first time, it faced and actively addressed the need to move towards association and constructive engagement with persons of other races. It marked the beginning of the end of segregated conferences in the Cape Province. History, however, has to question why twenty-one years elapsed between the 1975 resolutions and the dissolution of a racially based structure within the Province.

Following the 1975 “principles”, the 1976 objectives of the Cape Conference are set out as referred to in chapter four. Notably absent was any reference to race relations or dialogue or interaction with the sister conference in the same territory.



A series of actions were passed over the next few years which moved the Conference towards greater dialogue. This proved to be frustrating to the Good Hope Conference constituency. At every Constituency Meeting from 1974, actions were passed unanimously to merge with the Cape Conference;⁷²⁷ Good Hope College opened its doors to Black students from 1978; events in the north had long since left the Cape Conference behind. The Transvaal and Natal Conferences had absorbed the Coloured and Indian members of the Good Hope Conference into their ranks at the end of 1978. The schools, churches and manses of the former Good Hope

⁷²⁷ Ibid., 18.

Conference were taken over by the combined structure;⁷²⁸ after the merger of the SAUC and the SU in 1991, the actions of the GHC included a call to merge with the Southern Conference.

The slow progress was seen as a feet-dragging ploy and passionate speeches were made at GHC Constituency Meetings for the walls of *Apartheid* to be demolished within the Church. Among these were employees such as Lawrence Landers and Johan Abrahams. These, along with others who chose to speak out, were labelled as “Young Turks” by the more senior leaders within the GHC. Among the non-employees were Louis Petersen, Paul Goosen and Jerome Ramages. Notably, very few of the Coloured leaders were vocal on the issue. One of the reasons for this was the legacy of suppression of any criticism of the White structure of the Church as referred to earlier in this chapter.⁷²⁹

Document on Race Relations -- 1977

The Cape Conference issued an eight page document on Race Relations on October 25, 1977.⁷³⁰ This document contained “Seven Guidelines in Dealing with Race Relations.” Once again the Conference comes up with a list to supplement the eight “important things” of 1962 and the eight “principles” of 1975.

A disturbing feature of the “Seven Guidelines” is the detail it contains that is absent from the 1962 and 1975 documents. This detail gives an insight as to the thinking of the Cape Conference Executive Committee of the time.

An explanation of equality in God’s sight is qualified by the statements: “In and through Christ all men have equal access to salvation.” “Oneness in Christ has to do with salvation . .

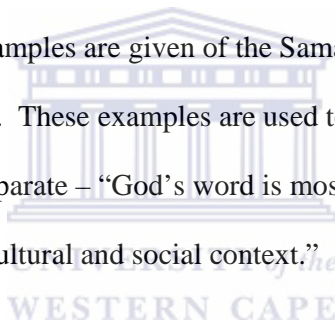
⁷²⁸ Du Preez and Du Pré, *A Century of Good Hope*, vol 1, 17

⁷²⁹ Ibid., vol. II, 42.

⁷³⁰ CC 1016/276/77.

. .” When discussing racial prejudice within and without the Church, the guidelines state: “While different races within the church should have no prejudice against each other, they will for the progress of the truth to be advanced, . . . , be prepared to retain their respective identities in separate worship.” Equality and unity are thus seen as soteriological with no impact upon human relationships – each group must remain in their own areas. The government’s system and ideology of Group Areas, Separate Amenities, Population Registration and Separate Development could easily resonate with the statement’s concept of equality before God.

A lengthy discussion ensues in the guidelines, arguing for ministering within “national” situations and “social units.” Examples are given of the Samaritan woman, the demoniac, Nicodemus and the prodigal son. These examples are used to argue for keeping different nations, contexts and cultures separate – “God’s word is most effectively proclaimed by God’s people within their own cultural and social context.”



The definition of church unity given by the guidelines is: “Church unity may be defined as the equal exertion of all members for the proclamation of the gospel to all people regardless of race or colour.” Equality is thus defined as equality of exertion. It further goes on to say: “In the context of race relations unity cannot be equated with uniformity.”

Uniformity needs to be understood in the particular context of the guidelines. One item is used to illustrate the understanding that ‘uniformity’ is a euphemism for removal of *Apartheid*.

Where only one place of worship exists in any area, persons of all social contexts [read: races] and ethnic groups should be given the right to worship with their fellow-believers, all such believers should mutually undertake the

responsibility of working toward the end of establishing additional places of worship where person of homogenous social contexts [read: of the same race] may feel more comfortable and prospective church members of all races may be made to feel comfortable with people of their own context [read: race].

The guidelines make allowance for the right of an individual to worship where he/she wishes. However, this is qualified by the statement that a person should not be subjected to exclusion for “occasional visits.” In addition, no person should impose him/herself on a congregation if he/she senses that his/her presence causes discomfort.

The guidelines end with seven “practical considerations.” Each of these seven considerations place restrictions on inter-racial mixing and membership. While the Cape Conference can be applauded for attempting to address the issue of Race Relations, the document created a disturbing image of a Church organization that propagated the concept of the separation of races as a biblical model. It is against this backdrop that the actions of further committees and task teams must be seen. It assists in comprehending how, repeatedly, the Cape Conference resisted all attempts to remove racial divisions between itself and its sister conferences in the same territory.

It assists in comprehending how, despite actions taken by the General Conference declaring racism a sin; despite the Autumn Council of the General Council of Seventh-day Adventists calling for the dismantling of racially defined conferences in October of 1990; despite the visits by two fact-finding missions set up by the World Church; despite the work of the combined conference task teams – when the action was needed to effect the merger of the Cape, Good

Hope and Southern Conference in 1995, the Cape Conference voted it down. This was followed by actions taken by the Cape Conference in 1996 and 1997 not to merge.⁷³¹

The '90's and beyond

Politically, the '90's provided the most rapid and climactic transformation in South Africa.

With the opening of the 1990 sitting of parliament, F. W. de Klerk announced the unbanning of the ANC, the release of Mandela from prison and other far-reaching reforms. Within one year the face of South Africa had changed, with all the main bastions of *Apartheid* removed.

The speed at which they were dismantled came as a surprise to most persons. The Church was also caught off-guard. For years it had been prevaricating with regard to reform in the Church. The laws on the statute books provided a convenient foil to those who defended the separate structures in the Church. As was seen in the 1975 programme of education on race relations⁷³² the Cape Conference found it necessary to give study to the legal restrictions regarding inter-racial association. It should be noted that the "inter-racial contacts" that were being investigated related to church attendance, joint worker's meetings, combined institutes, co-operation between departmental officers, etc.

"Legal restrictions" were seen to be impacting on different areas of the operation of the Church. Helderberg College admitted two students prior to 1974. One was a mature married minister of the Good Hope Conference, Alwyn G. du Preez, who was given a special concession to attend the College in order to complete his 3rd and 4th years (1967-1968). He had to stay off campus

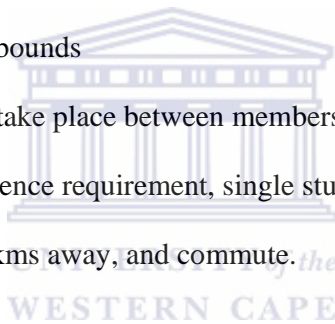
⁷³¹ The first action taken by the Cape Conference not to merge was in 1979. CC 586/214/79. This was reaffirmed in 1982. CC 442/182/82. After the 1982 negative vote, the Cape Conference, once again, comes up with an eight-point plan for "closer co-operation" with the GHC. CC 442/182/82. This was followed in 1988 by a six-point plan for "co-operation" with the GHC. Minutes of the Consolidation Committee of the Cape Conference held 18 January, 1988. At the same meeting a seven-point outline is given of the areas that needed study.

⁷³² CC 281/71/75

and was allowed access to the classrooms and library only. The same restrictions applied to Robert Hall, who attended the College in 1971 in order to complete his 4th year. Neither was allowed to graduate at the College.⁷³³

The first regular students of colour were admitted for the first time in 1974 – with the following conditions:

1. They were only for 3rd and 4th year theology students
2. They were not to stay in the hostels
3. They were restricted to using the classrooms, library, administration building and the Anderson Hall
4. The cafeteria was out of bounds
5. No fraternization was to take place between members of the opposite sex
6. In order to meet the residence requirement, single students had to live in the hostels at Good Hope College, 26 kms away, and commute.



Justification for these restrictions was sought from the legal framework of the country.

However, when the College administration of the day sought support from the government authorities on maintaining the restrictions, they were informed “that it was not, and had never been, government policy to interfere in the training of ministers by any denomination.”⁷³⁴

Similarly, the Cape Conference, when discussing the use of facilities belonging to the Cape Conference, in the “Seven Guidelines” document states:

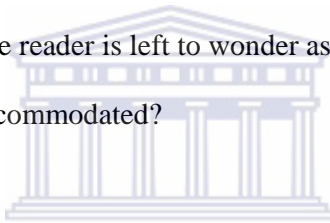
⁷³³ This matter was addressed by the College in 2007 when they were both awarded a *post facto* diploma by the institution. See Appendix VIII.

⁷³⁴ Du Preez and Du Pré, *A Century of Good Hope*, vol. 1, 105.

7. f. While legislation stands in respect of Group areas, and separate swimming facilities for races cannot be provided at our camp sites, combined holiday camps for all races seem inadvisable.

7.g. Because of already overcrowded conditions at our Hartenbos Camp meeting site as well as for reasons stated under f above, combined Camp meetings for all races also seem impracticable and inadvisable, except as provision is made for guest speakers and occasional visitors⁷³⁵

Recognizing that this was referring to the use of the swimming pool on private Church property, it becomes difficult to understand and accept that the Separate Amenities Act would have had jurisdiction over the Hartenbos Campsite. If it was indeed out of respect for the law and fear of reprisal by the security forces, the reader is left to wonder as to how “guest speakers and occasional visitors” would be accommodated?



In 1980 a request was made by the Good Hope Conference to make use of the Hartenbos Campsite for a Conference-sponsored event for members of the GHC only. No mixed swimming was to be involved. The response from the CC was:

After careful consideration by the Executive Committee and discussions with the local Municipality,

VOTED that we advise the GHC that we, with regret, cannot accede to their request for them to hire the Hartenbos camp site.⁷³⁶

By 1984 the Cape Conference’s view with regard to legislation requirements seems to have changed. Recognizing that the Group Areas and Separate Amenities Acts were still on the statute books, the 1977 guidelines have to be questioned as to why “legislation” was a factor at that stage, but not so in 1984 at which time this vote was taken:

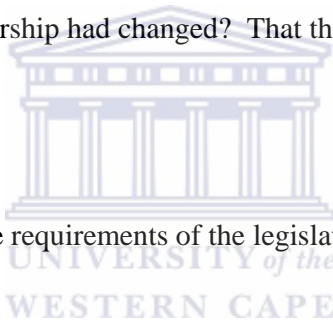
⁷³⁵ CC 1016/276/77
⁷³⁶ CC 700/263/80

VOTED to conduct a Lay Evangelists' Training Seminar during 8-16 January 1985 at our Hartenbos Youth Camp inviting M. T. Bascom of the General Conference

and further,

VOTED to invite as guests the wives and families of those who have arranged to attend and to extend a special invitation to the Good Hope Conference and Cape Field to send delegates⁷³⁷

The statute books do not indicate any repeal or modification of the Group Areas Act as cited in the '77 guidelines; if it was against legislation in 1977, what changed seven years later? Could it be that the attitude of the leadership had changed? That the law had been a convenient foil to racism?



By 1988/9 it seems as though the requirements of the legislation had undergone a further re-think by the Cape Conference:

Minutes of Hartenbos Youth Camp held at Cape Conference Headquarters on 8 June 1988.

44/C3/88

Requests have come from time to time from multi-racial groups and individuals who wish to use our camp facilities. We have not decided on a procedure to deal with this.

VOTED to request that all applications of this nature be made in writing subject to the following guidelines being implemented:

1. During holidays (sic) times Whites only

⁷³⁷ CC 357/112/84

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| 2. SDA groups (excluding holidays) | Multi-racial |
| 3. Other groups (non-Political) | Multi-racial |
| 4. Individuals based on merit | |

519/156/89

Whereas the Good Hope Conference requested to invite their members to attend meetings [at Hartenbos] on Saturday 1 April 1989,

VOTED to accede to their request.⁷³⁸

A seminar on Human Relations by Dr G. Oosterwal was approved to be conducted at Hartenbos involving an inter-racial group of Church employees:

“VOTED to approve and record a Human Relationship Seminar to be conducted by Dr G. Oosterwal at Hartenbos, 21-24 April 1991.”⁷³⁹

In a submission prepared by the Eastern Cape pastors of the Cape Conference for the General Conference South African Commission that was set up “to restudy the Adventist Church’s structure in [South Africa] with a view to unifying all aspects of church organization,”⁷⁴⁰ note is made of the need to “keep pace with the political changes in the RSA *but not to be restricted if political changes take too long, harming church growth*” (emphasis supplied).⁷⁴¹ Examination of the political changes that had and were sweeping the country indicate that the Church was by no means “restricted.”

⁷³⁸ Attached as Supplement C to 12 September, 1988 minutes of CC 432/130/88.

⁷³⁹ CC 225/72/90. See Appendix VI, E for an account of petty apartheid at Hartenbos in 1986.

⁷⁴⁰ Adventist Review, 22 November, 1990.

⁷⁴¹ CC 273/84/90.

This is illustrated by a sequel to the earlier Hartenbos actions. A vote is recorded Cape Conference EXCOM as having been passed by the Hartenbos Management Committee. It is subsequently recorded in the Cape Conference Executive Committee minutes under the heading: “Hartenbos Management Committee 3 June 1991.

WHEREAS the Camp is fully booked for December 1991, to recommend to the Cape Conference Executive Committee that as from July 1991 the Camp be available to *all persons* during the holiday season as well as for the rest of the year (emphasis supplied).

Thus ended the history of race restrictions at the camp site belonging to the Church – after the government had removed its *Apartheid* legislation from the statute books. The 3 June, 1991, action would have been so much more significant if it had been done *in spite* of earlier government legislation, not *because of* government scrapping of restrictions.



Some of the changes to government legislation and political events were:

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1990 | De Klerk unbans ANC, PAC and Communist Party; Nelson Mandela released from jail; Namibia obtains independence; Government un-bans liberation movements |
| 1991 | Repeal of Group Areas, Land, and Population Registration Acts; Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) formed to negotiate democratic constitution; Government backing of Inkatha vigilantes against ANC; Start of multi-party talks; de Klerk repeals remaining apartheid laws |
| 1992 | White referendum supports CODESA negotiations but they break down and Inkatha/ANC conflict intensifies |
| 1993 | Negotiations resumed at Kempton Park to form interim constitution; Mandela and de Klerk share Nobel Peace Prize |
| 1994 | Government of National Unity elected with ANC majority; Mandela inaugurated as State President; Commonwealth membership restored; Sanctions lifted |
| 1996 | Parliament adopts new constitution; National Party withdraws from coalition |

Table 3
Political Developments 1990 -- 1998

Following and proceeding from the 1975 SAUC Inter-Union Standing Committee, the Cape Conference and the SAUC, along with the rest of the Church organization in South Africa, embarked on a programme of negotiations and discussions through various forums and on difference levels in an attempt to pave the way for and achieve organizational restructuring in the country and in the Cape area.

A time line for these different forums and actions taken by them are as follows:

Date	Committee	Minute #	Action Taken
Jan 15, 75	Inter-Union Standing Committee	CC 274/70/75 CC 282/71/75	Churches declared open. "Unity Between European and African Workers" document accepted. CC refers open church to local church level for policy formulation
Oct 25, 77		CC 1016/276/77	Document on Race Relations adopted
1978	Dialogue Committee	CC 186/91/78 CC 476/181/79	Committee set up to discuss church unity with the GHC. Report given in June 1979. Accepted Bible and Spirit of Prophecy guidelines on unity and the GC and SAUC recommendations on unity
June 26, 79	Merger Committee	CC 477/182/79	To engage GHC in discussions on merger, listing pro's and con's.
17 Oct, 79	Merger Committee	CC 586/213/79	Report back conclusion: Do not see way clear for CC to merge. Better working relationships with sister conference to be fostered.
8 April, 82	Race Relations Sub-Committee (Set up to study the report of the 1981 GC Commission)	CC 442/182/82	Voted to reaffirm 586/213/79 not to consider a merger between CC and GHC

⁷⁴² See Appendix III.

22 June, 82	Sub-Committee on Race Relations & Church Unity	CC 518/197/82	Sub-Committee appointed to give study to SAUC recommendations
22 June, 82	Inter-Conference Church Unity Contact Group	519/197/82	Members of CC and GHC set up to seek ways of improved church unity
27 May, 87	Consolidation Sub-Committee	1/B1/87	CC Session action CC 89/32/87 mandating the CC EXCOM to consider consolidating the CC with the GHC led to establishment of Consolidation Sub-Committee. Voted to invite 7 representatives of GHC to meet with 7 members of CC.
7 Oct, 87	Consolidation Sub-Committee	/H4/87	Report Back. Meeting with GHC representatives
26 Nov, 87	Combined Consolidation Sub-Committee	H8/88	Combined with GHC. Agreed to develop a strategy to foster co-operation between different groups.
3 Dec, 87	Consolidation Sub-Committee	2/H3/88	Report back. Voted to recommend to CC EXCOM to give study to practical implications surrounding merger.
3 April, 88	Cape Conference Session	CC 312/100/88	Session called to allow EXCOM to report on mandate to consider consolidation. "Since the CC is an open conference, should the SAU and GHC desire a merger, VOTED that they present a detailed model of a proposed merger for consideration by the CC."
18 March, 91	CC EXCOM	CC 273/84/90	VOTED to accept and record the memorandum . . . to be presented to the General Conference Commission [on South Africa].
1991	CC EXCOM	CC 283/88/91	Supplement B: recording SAUC statement setting 31 December 1991 target date for merging of SAUC and SU.
1992	CC EXCOM	CC 527/153/92	Supplement A: Affirmed Biblical principle of unit in Christ, equality of people and principle of open churches. Requested setting up of Inter-

			Conference Contact group of three conferences in Cape area to work on consolidation issues.
18 Jan, 93	Interim Task Force Sub-Committee on Conference Merger	CC 93/41/93	Task Force of 21 – 7 from each conference.
3 May, 93	CC Task Force	CC 194/61/93	Report back.
24 April, 94	CC EXCOM	CC 345/92/94	Sub-Committee set up to formulate actions in response to the Task Force recommendations.
24 April, 94	CC EXCOM	CC 353/94/94	Negotiate with SAU to appoint a commission to study the viability of Union of Churches/Districts/Regions
20 Aug, 94	CC Session	CC 419/11/94	Motion to accept Task Force proposal for merger of CC, GHC and SU defeated: 21 Yes; 210 No; 3 Spoilt; 9 Abstentions.
20 Aug, 94	CC Session	CC 420/11/94	Motion to accept proposal for Union of Churches upheld: 209 Yes; 16 No.
1 Sept, 94	Merger Sub-Committee	CC 436/120/94	Set up by EXCOM to study Union of Churches document presented to August session.
24 Oct, 94	CC EXCOM	CC 440/121/94	Concern expressed over refusal of Joint Task Force to consider a modified model (Union of Churches) proposal. Refer joint session to Nov EXCOM
20 Nov, 94	CC EXOM	CC 462/127/94	Back-to-back sessions of the three conferences scheduled for April 27 – May 1, 1995.
16 Feb, 95	CC EXCOM	CC 532-534/141/95	Merger Committee to finalize compromise model which is to be presented to CC Camp Meeting.
4 May, 95	CC EXCOM	CC 554/147/95	Inter-Conference Elders' meeting to be organized in Cape Peninsula area on 5 August, 1995.
4 May, 95	CC EXCOM	CC 564/149/95	Regional discussions to take place re merger issues and procedure. To be arranged by Administration.
6 Aug, 95	CC EXCOM	CC 587/155/95	Suggested dates between December 95 and February 96

			given for back-to-back sessions. CC requesting that acceptable model be agreed on by all parties prior to calling of sessions. Sessions seen as part of the continuing negotiations (Supplement B2/3/95)
27 Aug, 95	CC EXCOM	CC 604/159/95	Date for back-to-back session set for 10-13 December 1995. Separate and Plenary sessions to be held leading to consensus. If consensus reached, dissolution and merger will follow.
15 Oct, 95	CC EXCOM	CC 625/167/95	“VOTED to recommend to the CC Session to accept the Conference merger model currently being negotiated by the SAU Merger Committee for implementation as soon as possible. Some aspects still need to be negotiated.”
18/19 Nov, 95	CC Session (Regular Session)	CC 15/11/95	Voted to accept the Merger recommendations CC625/167/95 as set forth in action CC14/11/95. Motion carried: Yes 139; No 111; Spoilt, 3.

Table 4
Cape Conference and SAU Actions: 1975—1995

Merger Delayed

Following the 1995 Cape Conference Session, the constituency voted on a motion to dissolve and merge with the GHC and the SC. The percentage in favour of the action was 70.49%. This was a significant decision on the part of the Cape Conference. However, the Constitution called for a 75% vote. Thus, while a noteworthy number of the delegates present were in favour of the merger, it was not enough to effect the merger. An action taken by the CC EXCOM after this vote was to recognize the majority vote and encourage continued and further dialogue with the GHC and the SU.

The other two conferences proceeded to implement the merger agreements that all three groups had been party to, culminating in the formation of the Southern Hope Conference on September 13, 1997. For the first time since 1933, the Coloured Church in South Africa was no longer part of an organizational unit that defined its existence by its being Coloured. However, it was still part of a racially defined organization consisting of Coloured and Black members, due to the non-merger of the Cape Conference with the SC and the GHC.

Epilogue

Subsequent to 1997, discussions between the Southern Hope Conference and the Cape Conference were initiated. However, not much progress was made, with each conference continuing to operate within the same territory – one catering for the exclusively Black, Coloured and Indian populations and one for the largely White population.

The “merger” that eventually took place in 2006 between the Cape Conference and the Southern Hope Conference, did not transpire because of a decision by the Cape Conference to merge – at its constituency meeting held in October 2005, it resolved not to dissolve and merge with the SHC. The dissolution eventually came about as a result of an action taken by the SAU Constituency Meeting of 2005 to dissolve the conferences in the Cape area and to restructure – thus forming the (new) Cape Conference. This Conference consisted of all members in the Cape area regardless of race.

Some of the members of the old Cape Conference were not in favour of the decision and launched a legal challenge to the restructuring. The resultant court case ruled in favour of the Church in October, 2009, leaving the restructuring intact.⁷⁴³

The Coloured membership of the Church in the Cape area of South Africa now belonged to an organization, as in 1887, that was not racially defined.



⁷⁴³ See Appendix IX

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

This study has set out to examine the organizational development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church within the Coloured Community in South Africa. It has sought to determine what the factors were that influenced the various phases of development against the hypothesis that the different phases were predicated by racism.

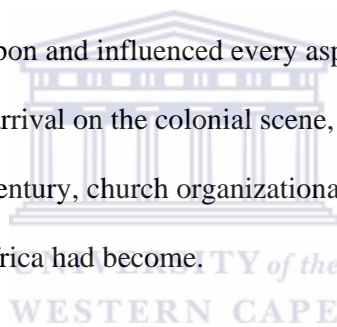
The study has demonstrated that racism has been an all-pervasive factor within South Africa since the time of the invasion of the country by European colonists. Commencing with the Dutch in 1652, the fabric of the social and political structure became inextricably linked to a hierarchy which placed the White Europeans in authority by virtue of being the conqueror, backed by superior weapons of war and control of the economy and the means of production. The next level was occupied by the mixed races which emerged from miscegenation between the imported slaves, the indigenous pastoral Khoikhoi, the colonists and occasional visitors to the occupied territory. As has been seen, it was problematic to develop a precise anthropological definition with regard to this non-homogenous group due to the close affinity and blurring of the lines between the resultant Coloured community and the White community. There is enough whiteness in the Coloured community and enough colour in the White community to render precision in definition impossible.

On the third level of the evolutionary pecking order were the indigenous black inhabitants of the country. A late arrival in the saga of colonial conquest, the mixed farmers of the eastern

and north-eastern regions of the country were dispossessed of their ancestral land and possessions because they were perceived as an obstacle and threat by the *trekboers* and the 1820 settlers to unlimited and unfettered expansion and occupation of the invaded land.

Legislation was enacted, firstly by the Dutch and subsequently by the British to protect the interests of the invaders and systematically disenfranchise the inhabitants of South Africa. The indigenous inhabitants of the country and their descendents were relegated to being 2nd and 3rd class citizens of their country in order to feed the greed and expansionist agenda of the European invaders.

This social structure impacted upon and influenced every aspect of South African existence. The Christian Church, an early arrival on the colonial scene, in general mirrored and supported this structure. By the mid 19th century, church organizational configurations reflected the segregated society that South Africa had become.



It was into this milieu that the Seventh-day Adventist Church made its appearance in the latter quarter of the 19th century. The Church did not engage society on its view and position regarding human relations and racial discrimination. It uncritically merged its thinking and operations to reflect the majority view of the minority ruling class. This it did despite the biblical view of the Church on the nature and equality of man, its historical heritage and the counsel as given by Ellen White.

From the turn of the 20th century the Church pursued an agenda of separation culminating in formal organizational structures for the different racial groupings as instituted by the Dutch,

British and subsequent South African governments. The process followed by the Church reveals that

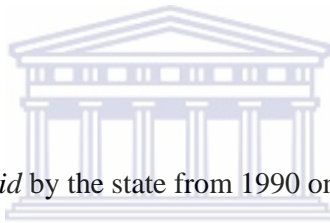
- by 1904 is sought to separate the student population at Union College according to race;
- by 1925 it attempted to split individual congregations on racial grounds;
- by 1926 it created a discriminatory wage scale based on colour;
- by 1927 it set up separate organizational structures for Blacks;
- by 1929 it had established three higher educational institutions for Blacks, Coloureds and Whites respectively – three separate institutions with disproportionate spending that favoured the White institution, as so eloquently described by Van Eck;
- by 1933 it created a separate organizational structure for Coloureds.

By the time the Nationalist government assumed power in 1948, all the mechanisms had been put in place to maintain White supremacy within society and the Church. All the Church organizational units within South Africa were directed by Whites. Those structures set up for Blacks and Coloureds were under White leadership. Salary scales and facilities favoured Whites.

While some commentators have postulated that the Church was ahead of the government in applying *Apartheid*, it appears as though it would be more accurate to state the Church uncritically imbibed and adopted the policies of the government of the day. As has been seen, while the practice of segregation and separation became subsumed in the ideology of *Apartheid* as propagated by the post-1948 Nationalist government, the discrimination practiced by the Church found its roots in the social engineering initiated by Van Riebeeck and

perpetuated by successive governors, prime ministers and other heads of state to varying degrees.

Very few instances can be found where the Church moved ahead of the state in implementing or instituting discriminatory practices. One critical area where this is observed is in relation to the operating of the training facilities for ministers: the state never legislated or sought to interfere with this function, yet the Church retained its policy of separation in this regard right through to the last quarter of the 20th century. Another arena of separation not legislated was the use of facilities on privately owned property of the Church such as campsites. However, even in both of these cases, the action of the Church was perpetrated with reference to existing legislation.

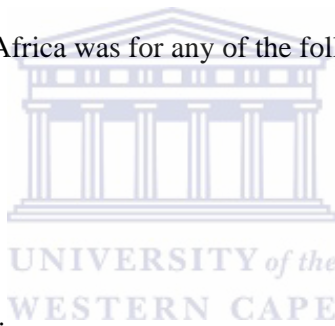


After the dismantling of *Apartheid* by the state from 1990 onwards, those within the Church who continued to seek segregation no longer had the support of government legislation to shore up a separationist ideology. Justification for separation was now sought in cultural differences, economic considerations, church growth concerns, language differentiation, worship styles and fear of minority subjection and subjugation. Church unity and equality became defined as a soteriological and missiological construct – we are all equal before God with an obligation to exert equal energy in reaching out to others with the Gospel within our defined contexts. Unfortunately those contexts favoured the “haves” at the expense of the “have-nots.” And the “haves” and the “have-nots” were on the opposite ends of the racial divide.

A George Orwellian mantra was adopted: We are all equal, but some are more equal than others.⁷⁴⁴ What this view ignored was the need to reach across the artificially created racial divide. As with other forms of idolatry, the golden calf of *Apartheid* had been built and its builders now continued to bow down to their own creation, defending its ideologically-appropriated sacrosanctity.

Each phase of the organizational development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa, as applied to the Coloured community, can be seen to having been influenced by and impacted upon by the Church's view and practice of separation based on colour. No evidence can be found in the documentation available that the creation of separate structures for different racial groups in South Africa was for any of the following reasons:

- Biblical Injunction
- Ellen G White Counsel
- General Church Policy
- Missiological Considerations
- Church Growth Factors
- Economic Pressures
- Government Legislation



The opinion of this researcher, based on this study, is that the primary reason that can be proffered is that it was in order to pursue, perpetuate or maintain a racist agenda. The hypothesis has thus been proven to be valid.

Recommendations

Arising from this study the following recommendations are offered:

⁷⁴⁴ With apologies to George Orwell in *Animal Farm*.

1. That all members of the Church confess and acknowledge before our Creator that we are all sinners and stand equally condemned in the presence of a Holy, Just, Merciful and Righteous God;
2. That our collective guilt behoves us to be forgiving and tolerant towards all mankind for their perceived failings in the light of Scripture that elevates the right of stone-throwing to the guiltless (John 8:7);
3. That the formal Church structure in South Africa seeks ways of creating a forum in which the collective hurt of those affected by the perpetration of racism within the Church can be recognized, acknowledged and addressed – the Church needs to move beyond the philosophical TRC statement and the deleterious Court Case;
4. That further research is undertaken in order to provide a comprehensive general history of the SDA Church in South Africa and that this be published for use in the tertiary and general reading arena;
5. That research into the Black Church in South Africa be engaged in to ensure that that segment of history is not lost to posterity;
6. That students, amateur historians, church members and church leaders give serious attention and study to recording and preserving the history of individual pioneers, congregations and institutions – the culture of history needs to be cultivated and nurtured to ensure that future generations will have landmarks and monuments that can testify to God's leading in His Church.

“We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.” E G White, *Life and Sketches*, p. 196.

“And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? Then ye shall let your children know”

Joshua 4:21, 22.



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APPENDIX I

**ACTIONS TAKEN SEPARATING
THE COLOURED WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA**

SAUC259/52/30

8 September 1930.

WHEREAS our work among the Coloured people of South Africa has shown very encouraging growth in certain sections of the field, and the prospects are bright for building up a much larger constituency in various parts of the Union as we extend and intensify our evangelistic programme, and

WHEREAS our Coloured believers have made the most marked progress in their own experience, and in Sabbath School, Missionary Volunteer and general church activities, developing strong leaders and efficient church officers, in churches organised for and officered by our Coloured believers under the direction of the Coloured department,

THEREFORE, VOTED that we approve the principle of separate churches for our Coloured members throughout the South African Union Conference, and that we urge our Conferences to develop their Coloured work as a separate department, maintaining so far as possible separate church organisations for our Coloured constituency, and encouraging our Coloured believers to build up their own local church and the Coloured department to the highest possible point of efficiency.

CC594/165/30

September 8 and 9, 1930.

Members present: L.L. Moffit (chairman), Bretheren W.D. Smith, R.G. Morton, L. Billes, S.G. Hiten, G.E. Shankel. By invitation: A.F. Tarr, N.C. Wilson, J.F. Wright and Q.H. Jubber. Elder N.C. Wilson – Union President.

WHEREAS our work among the Coloured people of the Cape Conference has shown very encouraging growth in certain sections of the field, and the prospects are bright

for building up a much larger constituency in various parts of the Province as we extend and intensify our evangelistic programme, and
WHEREAS our Coloured believers have made the most marked progress in their own experience, and in Sabbath School., Missionary Volunteer and general Church activities, developing strong leaders and efficient Church officers in Churches organised for and officered by our Coloured believers under the direction of the Coloured Department,
VOTED, That in harmony with the action of September 7, 1930, of the South African Union Committee, we approve the principle of separate Churches for our Coloured members throughout the Cape Conference and that we push forward in the development of our Coloured work as a separate Department, maintaining separate Church organisations whenever there is a sufficient number to be organised into a Church and encouraging our Coloured believers to build up their own local Church and the Coloured Department to the highest possible point of efficiency.

In pursuance of the above action, we
RECOMMEND, that the European members of the Wynberg Church transfer their membership for the time being to the Claremont Church, and that the Wynberg Church building be loaned for the time being to the Coloured Department, and that this be carried out by the close of the year. We also,
RECOMMEND, in carrying out this policy, that in our evangelistic efforts, where there are both European and Coloured persons accepting the Truth, they be carried forward in their experience by the evangelistic company to the path of baptism, at which time they shall be baptised into their respective Churches.

It is also recognised that it would greatly facilitate the procedure if there could be associated with such efforts representatives of both European and Coloured Church officers and Conference workers to become acquainted with the new believers enabling them to form a contact with the respective Churches into which they are to be received as members; and we
RECOMMEND, That wherever possible this provision be made.

Chairman: L.L. Moffitt
Secretary: G.E. Shankel

Page 274--275 of SAU Session Mins 23rd April 1933 16th session.

The chairman referred to the work of the Survey Commission and after Elder Wright had spoken, the following recommendation was put to the meeting: --

“After carefully considering various suggestions for effecting economies in the South African Union, the Survey commission

Recommends to the South African Union Conference the uniting of the Natal-Transvaal and Cape Conferences and the establishment at Bloemfontein of the headquarters of the amalgamated Conference together with a central Book Depository to replace the two depositories now being operated by the two Conferences.

The Commission Further

Recommends that the Coloured work become a department under the South African Union.

The Recommendations of the Survey Commission were unanimously adopted. It was Voted that authority be delegated the Union and Local Conference Committees, with the General Conference and Division Representatives, the workers here assembled and six laymembers from each conference, that these constitute a Committee to put into effect the recommendation of the Survey Commission and to make such adjustments in organisation as may be necessary, to appoint officers and Committees and to transact such other business as might be done by a duly delegated body.

Laymembers appointed: Cape Conference: A Chilton, Q. H. Jubber, Robert Tarr, J. M. Vorster, A. E. Shone, S. J. Stevenson. Natal-Transvaal Conference: A. A. Pitt, Mrs R. C. Honey, Mrs van der Post, J. J. Birkenstock, W. H. Dale, P. J. Bastiaans.

Voted that the special committee appointed be empowered to make the necessary changes in the Constitution as may be affected by the amalgamation.

Full Membership of Special Committee (meeting held Victoria Park, April 23 1933.)
N.C. Wilson, J. T. Robinson, W. C. Walston, S. J. Stevenson, A. E. Shone, Dr. J.J. Bell, A.W. Staples, J. D. Wright, J.J. Birkenstock, N. J. Jeffes, L.L. Moffitt, J.J. Millard, Mrs van der Post, W. D. Smith, J. G. Slate, A. A. Pitt, T. Weiss, L. L. Billes, D. C. Theunissen, L. A. Vixie, I. E. Potter, A. Chilton, F. E. Thompson, J. N. De Beer, Robert Tarr, S. S. Hiten, A.C. Le Butt, P. W. Willmore, P. A. Venter, Q. H. Jubber, H. L. Ferguson, A. F. Tarr, Miss C. A. Dixie, C. Pike, D. F. Tarr, P. F. Bastiaans, G. W. Shone, W. C. Tarr, J. E. Symons, J. M. Vorster, A. W. Staples Jr., W. H. Hurlow, J. Vermeulen.

APPENDIX II

STATEMENT OF THE SAUC TO THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION

STATEMENT OF CONFESSION

DOCUMENT TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION SUBMITTED BY THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA

As Seventh-day Adventists we confess our faith in the coming Lord and Saviour (the One “who is and who was and who is to come” Rev 1:4, 8; 4:8) who as such calls for “the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and hold fast to the faith of Jesus.” (Rev 14:12; cf. 12:17; 13:10)¹

In the face of the heresy of apartheid, we confess that we have failed by our sins of omission and commission to properly evidence the endurance of the saints, keep the commandments of God, or hold fast to the faith of Jesus, thereby misrepresenting the eternal gospel of Jesus Christ (Rev 14:6,7). This has been hurtful to our society, to the identity and mission of our corporate church, and to the lives of its individual members. Therefore, in deep repentance we seek for forgiveness from God and our fellow citizens, and commit ourselves to reformation, justice and reconciliation.

As members of the church we are continually called upon to confess our faith in Christ. However, we recognise that we cannot confess faith in Christ without also concretely confessing our failures in reflecting the form of Christ in the world.

Since as Seventh-day Adventists we frequently use eschatological formulations like the one quoted above from Revelation 14:12 (cf. also 12:17; 13:10 & 19:10) as

¹All biblical texts in the statement to follow are taken from the New Revised Standard Version.

summary statements of the identity and mission of the church, it is appropriate that we put these “identifying marks” of the church to the test in regard to our own attitudes and actions during the apartheid era.

The Enduring Patience of the Saints

Just as the church in the time of the Roman Empire was called upon to “render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s” (Matt 22:21; cf. both Rom 13 & Rev 13) so the church in our day is called to insightful discernment of the spirit of the times and to responsible action in light of the present but not yet consummated Kingdom of God. Both then and now this calls for the patient endurance of suffering for the cause of Christ. We confess that we were altogether too caught up with maintaining our traditional a-political stance with regard to the separation of church and state to effectively combat the viciousness of apartheid. Under the pressure of the times we allowed the structures of the church to gradually become patterned along the lines of apartheid, by providing separate church regional organisations for different racial groups within the church. We failed to realize that the state demanded of its citizens things to which it had no claim and that, as Christians, we should have resisted this usurpation of God’s authority to the uttermost.

All this happened *despite* the fact that officially the church claimed to be opposed to racial discrimination, and that at the highest levels it remained organisationally one body. This demonstrates how easy it is for us to basically conform to the pattern of the world in spite of our intentions to do otherwise. In attempting, rightly, to stay out of party politics we ended up getting involved more than we knew in the national politics of the status quo. Without any means of properly critiquing what we were doing because of our socio-political ignorance, we tragically misread the “signs of the times”. This must not happen again.

Although it is true that as a church body we never officially ascribed to the ideology and doctrines of apartheid, we now recognise that we failed to fully acknowledge that apartheid, in any of its forms, flies in the face of the gospel of “God with us” and must therefore be reckoned a heresy. As a church we failed to truly *be the church* (the

“called-out ones”) by both our tendency to avoid the suffering that accompanies true discipleship, and our silence in the face of the suffering of others.

Keeping the Commandments of God

Seventh-day Adventists believe that we are saved by grace through faith in Christ alone. But such grace is not cheap, and it leads to a life of loving obedience to God. We confess that despite our zeal for the commandments of God we failed to adequately contextualise just what the righteousness of God meant in practise in South Africa. Can we honestly say that we obeyed the injunction to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself” (Luke 10:27)?:

Did we not all too often put the god of expediency before the Lord God the righteous judge (Exodus 20:2-3; Deut 5:6-7)?

Can we be sure that we did not make for ourselves “an idol” (Exodus 20:4; Deut 5:8) of this or that doctrinal tenant or our own self-interest as a minority religious community at the expense of the poor, oppressed and needy of our land (Isaiah 58)?

Did the proscription against “making wrongful use of the name of the Lord” (Exodus 20:7; Deut. 5:11) not compel us to resist those who would attempt to misuse that Holy name for an evil purpose?

But, perhaps most poignantly of all, we have to ask how we could claim to properly keep the Sabbath holy without heeding its explicit demand for practical justice, co-humanity, deliverance and healing (Isaiah 1:10-18; 56:1-7; 58; Matt 11:28-12:8)?

Do we not have to explicitly confess that precisely as *Seventh-day* Adventists we should have done more to exemplify the meaning of the biblical Sabbath both within our own community and in our external dealings with society?

Furthermore, in the light of the biblical extension of the humanitarian implications of the Sabbath to the jubilee year, should we not have realized that we are not at liberty to treat the land itself as an inalienable possession, but rather as a trust for responsible stewardship (Lev 25)? For surely true Sabbath-keeping and keeping silence in the face of oppression are mutually exclusive (Exodus 20:8-11; Deut 5:12-15).

Respect for family, life, marriage, property, truth and limits make up the second table of the law of God (Exodus 20:12-17; Deut. 5:16-21). Once again we have to ask whether we did enough to honour the law, and uphold the righteousness of God in the face of the rampant lawlessness and disregard for every one of these principles in our country:

How could we not see that the Group Areas Act and Pass Laws attacked the very fabric of family life, destroying parental and marital relationships?

Should we not have recognized in the institutionalisation of systemic violence, and the brutalisation of the innocent, a direct transgression of the commandment not to kill?

How could we not have appealed to the prohibition against stealing in the face of forced removals, expropriation of land, and the exploitation of labour?

Surely the command not to bear false witness demanded that the church speak out against the lies, deceit and distortion that became endemic in our society? For Jesus said “you will know the truth and the truth will make you free” (John 8:32).

Do we not have to admit that we coveted security, peace and quiet for ourselves, with public respect and acceptance, rather than risk raising the wrath of a state running amuck with the exploitation of the poor, and the enrichment and corruption of the strong?

We now recognize that to restrict our attention merely to the so-called “spiritual realm” belies the physical, social and very practical intent of the commandments. We resolve to be more biblical in relation to the balance between the spiritual and the social in the future.

In the light of all this, we cast ourselves on the mercy of God and appeal to the grace of Jesus Christ for forgiveness, reconciliation and restoration.

Holding Fast to the Faith of Jesus

At the heart of our faith is the reconciliation accomplished in the person and by the work of Jesus Christ. We, together with all Christians, confess that “there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female;” for all of us are “one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28; cf. Eph 1-3; John 17). As adopted children of God, unity with God and each other is not an optional extra—it is what salvation means. As our official statement of fundamental beliefs declares:

The church is one body with many members, called from every nation, kindred, tongue and people. In Christ we are a new creation; distinctions of race, culture, learning, and nationality, and differences between high and low, rich and poor, male and female, must not be divisive among us. We are all equal in Christ, who by one Spirit has bonded us into one fellowship with Him and with one another; we are to serve and be served without partiality or reservation. Through the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures we share the same faith and hope, and reach out in one witness to all. This unity has its source in the oneness of the triune God, who has adopted us as His children. — Fundamental Belief #13 [SDA Church Manual, 1980]

We have to confess that, in appearance and reality, our practise in South Africa gave lie to the very intent of this tenant of our own fundamental beliefs. We were out of step with the stated principles of our worldwide church.

In Revelation 12:17 the saints are identified as “those who keep the commandments of God and *hold the testimony of Jesus.*” According to Revelation 19:10 “the

testimony of Jesus is the *spirit of prophecy*.” For a church that has made much of the “Spirit of Prophecy” as an important spiritual gift within the body of Christ, we have to confess that we have been singularly at fault in failing to address the tragic distortion of human rights, and the systemic misrepresentation of Christianity in our country—*prophetically*. The prophetic task of the church demands that we not hesitate to “speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute,” to “speak out, judge righteously, [and] defend the rights of the poor and needy” (Proverbs 31:8,9). For one cannot separate the evangelistic imperative to proclaim the testimony of Jesus, from the critical task inherent in the spirit of prophecy. The church needs to proclaim both the good news of God’s saving “Yes” contained in the gospel of Christ *and* the prophetic warning of God’s righteous “No” which will be uttered finally and decisively on the day of judgment. But the prophetic No must always be articulated and understood for the sake of the gospel. Yes—the good news of God’s lavish, astonishing and reconciling grace!

We commit ourselves, therefore, once again and all the more earnestly to the proclamation of the “eternal gospel” of the universality of God’s love; the denouncement of the “Babylonian captivity” of the church in which it sells its soul to the state; and the articulation of a more effective and clear warning against the worship of the “beast”—that civil-religious concoction of blasphemy, coercion, human arrogance and injustice that seems to find root all too easily in our midst (Rev. 14:6-11).

In answer to the questions of the TRC, we reply:

To what extent has your denomination/community suffered from apartheid in the past?

Apartheid hurt *both* oppressed and oppressors, albeit in different ways. As a denomination we have been affected by both forms of hurt. However, the vast majority of the members of the Seventh-day Adventist church in South Africa, by virtue of the simple fact that they belonged to disadvantaged communities, were victims of a governmental system that rode roughshod over normal human rights in

many areas of everyday living. Legislation enacted during these years has been well documented. Laws were fashioned to govern practically every aspect of life from the cradle to the grave. The effects of these societal manipulations impacted on all sectors of our membership. We list a few of them, but by so doing we do not and indeed cannot quantify the human emotion, pain and sorrow involved.

A. Group Areas Act

Hundreds of Seventh-day Adventist families were forced to leave their homes. The overall impact of such actions on the lives of those involved might never be fully calculated. However, the cascading effect on society was devastating. Congregations were forced to sell their churches to the Community Boards set up by the state. No profit was allowed. Therefore new church buildings could not be afforded and the world Seventh-day Adventist Church was called upon to subsidise the funding of replacement church buildings. This process by itself took many years and during the interim period members were forced to worship in classrooms and inadequate community halls. Demographics led to increasing segregation in local churches. Nokuphila hospital in Sophiatown was forced to close. Schools were closed or relocated. A widening gulf separated the “haves” and the “have nots”. Unequal distribution of resources, unequal pay, and unequal opportunities hammered home the hard reality of injustice. Even before the apartheid era, black church members had experienced the stereotypes, cultural biases, paternalism and patterns of discrimination so characteristic of the colonial period. Now they had to face its explicit and systematic extension and proliferation. A further unfortunate feature of this process was that scores and scores of our better educated and talented members left the country to settle in less threatening environments.

B. So-called “Immorality Act”

Not a few church members were forced to leave the country in order to marry the one they loved, just because the draconian and unbiblical “immorality act” declared it an offense to marry or even to fraternize across the “colour line.” Many others were forced to give up important friendships; families were split; and

others had to endure dehumanizing racial classification and re-classification ordeals.

C. Job Reservation

Thousands of church members were adversely affected by discriminatory practises such as segregated amenities, restricted access to education, training and health care, and job reservation.

D. The Draft System and Compulsory National Service

The draft system of military conscription and later the compulsory national service system set up by the state to maintain the establishment, created much anguish amongst a sizable proportion of our membership. Young men struggled with conflicting calls to duty.² Not only the traditional dilemmas of whether to take up arms or not, or whether to request special privileges for the purpose of Sabbath-keeping or some other activity considered by the system to be a minority religious practice—but for many whether they could have *any* part in the “unjust war” being waged against their disenfranchised fellow citizens in apartheid South Africa. Some of those who did participate voluntarily or otherwise in the security apparatus of the times (particularly during the “total onslaught” period), were schooled in thought patterns that affected their ideas, ideology and value system. Several church members on both sides of the divide were physically and emotionally scarred by the terrible effects of war. Some lost life itself.

2. What have you done to struggle against apartheid—or to support apartheid—in the past?

² From its inception the Seventh-day Adventist church has been radically opposed to violence and war (based on its understanding that NT principles commit the Christian to peace, not to mention the sixth commandment itself). But the church also accepts that the Christian has a duty as a loyal citizen to serve his or her country even to the point of giving life itself in defence of freedom and justice if called upon to do so. In all the wars and low intensity conflicts to wreak our country from the South African War, through the two World Wars, to the liberation struggles of recent times, the vast majority of Seventh-day Adventist conscripts solved this dilemma by agreeing to serve their country, but only in a non-combatant role. More often than not this was accomplished by serving in the medical corps. To save life rather than take it was the point to be made. During the apartheid era this became more difficult because of the very unjust nature of the state itself. Even the problematic concept of a “just war” became untenable. Several Seventh-day Adventists chose “conscientious objector” status and refused to do National Service at all. Some were jailed and forced to do community service. Many more chose exile from South Africa rather than serve an unjust system which labelled as “enemy”, not some external aggressor, but one’s own brother.

We did not do enough to struggle against apartheid. Due to the intricate political system in force in South Africa, in which ideology was systematised and given Biblical and theological support, effects of the system rubbed off on the thinking of some, even among our church leadership. Many in the church imbibed, wittingly and unwittingly, the political philosophy in vogue at the time. This undoubtedly had an effect on the creation of structures which mirrored the political structures of the times. The church was divided into two Union Conferences with separate administrations, one to cater for the Blacks and the other for Indians, Coloureds and Whites. Indeed the two structures did not communicate with each other all that much except for certain essential times such as when formulating certain broad church policies. Secondary and tertiary educational institutions (such as Union College and Spionkop College) which had served all races in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, soon became segregated along racial lines. Separate Welfare structures were created. To the degree that the church patterned itself after the thinking of the politicians, significant inequalities soon became apparent. The level of theological training, the preparation of teachers, the quality of educational standards at every level, salary structures, and pension provisions, all reflected the inequality of the structural arrangements and impacted on the level of service offered our members.

We are ashamed to admit that by and large the church acquiesced, through its silence and often times by its example inside and outside South Africa, to the injustice suffered by some and the injury done to our church community as a whole. The emotional and spiritual damage to our membership can hardly be estimated. Our sincere hope is that all persons in this fair land both within and without the ambience of our influence will grow in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ who understands our mortal frames and the frailties of our beings and offers compassion to all of his children. (Matthew 9:36)

However, this is not the total picture. There were also a significant number of those in the church at all levels that did what they could to resist the injustice and totalitarianism of apartheid. There were church administrators who opposed and spoke out against the creation of separate Unions in the 1950's. The church opposed the strong attempt in the 1960's to create a separate conference for Afrikaans speaking members because of political and language motivations. After such a breakaway

conference was formed, the church held its ground and eventually most of the members and ministers who had left recognised their mistake and returned to the church. During the 1970's the separate administrative structures for coloured and Indian members in the then Transvaal and OFS/Natal regions were disbanded and these members and churches merged with the “white” Transvaal and Oranje-Natal conferences. Individual ministers here and there spoke out more or less forcefully against the mirroring of apartheid within the church. From the 1980's on, we have academic papers, articles and books from both white and black Seventh-day Adventist’s incisively critiquing the apartheid system. As already mentioned, a significant number of Adventist conscripts chose jail, community service or exile rather than serve to defend a system they believed to be unjust. Many SDA families and young people left the country because of their opposition to apartheid. Many thousands of white church members opposed the Nationalist government of the time. Thousands more, in their own personal contact with members of other races, demonstrated Christian care and charity.

Although it is hard to determine the figures, a significant number of Adventists, or those with an Adventist background or exposure to the church through Adventist schools, played an active part in the struggle itself. Special mention should be made of the role of the extensive network of church-run schools (from primary to tertiary level) which, regardless of their limited racial inclusiveness, provided a rare alternative to the ideology promoted in state-run schools. With a distinctive philosophy of education, Seventh-day Adventist schools did not blindly follow the curriculum of the public school system. Together with the Catholic parochial school system, Adventist schools provided a real alternative to the “National Christian Education” of the government of the time. From about the mid 1970's the church in South Africa has been in the process of dismantling its discriminatory structures and policies in the school system.

Of course, looking back we have to acknowledge that none of this was particularly significant or sufficient. We could and should have done so much more. But it is both proper and important that we give recognition to those who had the insight, foresight and courage to swim against the stream during the stormy days that are now behind us.

What is your denomination's/community's commitment toward the future?

How do you see yourself working for reconciliation? What expertise and experience are you able to bring to the process of reconciliation and nation building?

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has now begun a process of unification. Following on from the merger of the two Unions in 1991, the church now has a fully representative conference structure in Kwazulu-Natal, and partially merged structures in the Free State, Northern, Eastern and Western Cape. While challenges still remain, we are committed to a complete removal of any vestige of racially motivated segregation at all levels.

Officially all our churches are open to full membership and participation rights. All educational institutions admit students without regard to race, salaries are being equalised irrespective of race and gender over a phase-in period. Our Community Service programme is working under a revised constitution approved by the Department of Welfare. This service is under constant review by our national body - and our stated aim is to provide a more efficient service to the poorest of the poor.

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

As a church we commit ourselves in our proclamation and practice of the gospel in the context of South Africa:

to endeavour to never again be silent in the face of injustice to any of our fellow citizens.

to ensure that our structures, policies and personal lives evidence an acceptance of all persons (regardless of race, gender or any other such distinction) as neighbours with a right to be treated with full equality.

to work toward the completion of the process of internal church unification by loving persuasion and by example.

to become re-incorporated into the normal world structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

to speak out on public issues affecting the broad society when moral, religious and other matters of conscience are at stake.

to use our resources and expertise in the Welfare programme, Meals on Wheels Services and the Adventist Relief Agency (ADRA SA and International) to assist in the reconstruction and development of South Africa. We will encourage all our churches and members to become directly involved in demonstrating real compassion to people in need, and active in answering the needs of the community around them.

to continue to serve the health-care needs of our citizens through our Adventist Health System, church-owned medical practices, and public health programmes.

to continue to ensure that our educational institutions are multi-cultural and multi-racial environments where diversity is valued, and respect, tolerance and understanding promoted. Our tertiary institutions should play a leading role in the reconciliation and development process, by graduating leaders in business, arts and sciences, and theology with the integrity, courage and wisdom to make a positive difference in the new South Africa. Through our educational system we will also continue to train health educators, teachers, child-care givers, and pre-primary teachers to serve in areas where help is needed most. Our long-standing commitment to a philosophy of service must be maintained and concretised in the life of every student.

to extend our Literacy programme to help with the backlog that currently exists.

to strive to better reflect the love of God for every one of His children so that the healing of mind, body and soul will continue in our beloved land, and the hope of the establishment of God's Kingdom might become a reality in our time.

As members of Christ's body, we can do no other than love unconditionally, care compassionately, and live prophetically in joyful expectation of the coming King.



APPENDIX III

POLITICAL TIME LINE³

c. 1000BC – AD 200	‘Pastoralist revolution’: Khoikhoi herders move into South Africa
AD 300 – 1000	Bantu-speaking farmers move into South Africa
1441	Portugal purchases black slaves from African slave traders on Gold Coast
1488	Bartholomew Diaz navigates the southern tip of Africa
1497	Vasco da Gama lands on Africa’s east coast
1652	Dutch East India Company establishes settlement at Cape Town
1653	First clash between black and white
1650s – 1780s	Colonial expansion into northern and eastern Cape and conquest of Khoikhoi
1658	First slaves imported to Cape
1665	First Dutch Reformed Church congregation founded at the Cape
1667	Indians arrive at the Cape
1760s	Slaves and Khoikhoi obliged to carry passes
1775	Britain’s thirteen American colonies rebel
1776	Britain’s American colonies declare independence
1783	Britain and America sign peace treaty in Paris
1789	French Revolution
1795	British seize Cape Colony from Dutch
1799 – 1803	Khoikhoi rebellion in eastern Cape
1803	Territory returned to Dutch
1806	British establish permanent control over Cape Colony
1807	Britain declares slavery illegal in its possessions
1808	East India Company issues Rix Dollar banknotes in Cape Town
1812	Indenture of Khoikhoi children on settler farms
1814	Cape Colony added to British Empire. Bought for £6m sterling
1816	Slagter’s Nek hangings
1820s	Expansion of Zulu kingdom (‘Mfecane’)
1820	British settlers arrive at the Cape of Good Hope
1821	Great Britain adopts gold standard
1825	Birth of Paul Kruger in Cradock, Cape Colony
1828	Ordinance 49 imposes pass controls on African workers in Cape Colony; Ordinance 50 ends Khoikhoi indenture

³ Compiled from Du Pre, Allen and Worden

1833	The Cape's remaining slaves emancipated
1834	Slave emancipation; Port Natal renamed Durban
1835	Boers begin Great Trek migration from Cape Colony; British sterling introduced
1836	Settlers leave eastern Cape ('Great Trek'); Ordinance 9 discounts race or colour as franchise criteria
1838	Trekkers defeat Zulu and establish Republic of Natalia (Natal); Slaves officially freed
1842	Masters and Servants Ordinance provides political equality for coloureds
1843	British annexation of Natal
1846	Shepstone introduces segregated administration for Africans in Natal; Bloemfontein founded
1848	Bloemfontein and districts incorporated into British Empire
1852	Sand River Convention: British recognise Boer independence in region north of the Vaal River (Transvaal); Coloureds excluded from franchise in ZAR
1853	Birth of Cecil John Rhodes in England; Coloureds granted franchise in Cape Colony
1854	Bloemfontein Convention: British recognise Orange Free State; Cape Colony obtains Representative Government; Coloureds excluded from franchise in OFS
1856	Natal separates from the Cape Colony
1856 – 7	Xhosa cattle killing
1857	Boers proclaim the Transvaal a republic
1860	Introduction of Indian indentured labourers to Natal (ended 1911)
1866	Cape annexes British Kaffraria
1867	Discovery of diamonds at Vaal-Hartz river (Kimberley)
1870	Rhodes arrives in South Africa
1871	British annex diamond fields (Griqualand West); Gold discovered in Pietersburg (Transvaal)
1872	Cape obtains Responsible Government
1873	Gold discovered at Pilgrim's Rest (Transvaal)
1874	International gold standard established
1875	'Black Flag' revolt at Kimberley; Foundation of Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners (Paarl); Portuguese rights to Delagoa Bay formally recognised
1877	British annex Transvaal
1878	British defeat Thlaping (Tswana) rebellion in Griqualand West; British annexes Walvis Bay; Payl Kruger visits London
1879	British invasion of Zululand; British defeat Pedi
1879 – 85	Transkei annexed to Cape Colony
1880	Griqualand West annexed to Cape Colony; Cape war with

	Sotho; Foundation of Afrikaner Bond (Cape); Boers rebel against British'; Commencement of First Anglo-Boer War
1881	Transvaal rebellion forces British withdrawal; Battle of Majuba ends in British defeat; First Anglo-Boer War ends; Rhodes becomes a member of the Cape Colony parliament
1882	Foundation of Imbumba ya Manyama (eastern Cape)
1884 – 5	British annex southern Bechuanaland
1885	Kruger and Rhodes meet on the Vaal River
1886	Gold discovered on Witwatersrand (Johannesburg); Transvaal gold deposits established as richest in the world
1887	British annex Zululand
1890	Kruger's Franchise Law denies political rights to Transvaal's uitlanders; Rhodes becomes prime minister of Cape Colony
1891	Cape Town and Johannesburg linked by rail
1892	Franchise and Ballot Act limits black vote by finance and education; Property franchise qualification raised and education test instituted
1893	Natal obtains Responsible Government; Gandhi arrives in South Africa
1894	Glen Grey Act establishes separate land and tax system for Africans (eastern Cape); Natal Legislative Assembly Bill deprives Indians of the right to vote
1895	Southern Bechuanaland annexed to Cape Colony; Transvaal government asserts control over Swaziland; Jameson Raid from Cape fails to topple Transvaal government
1896 – 7	Rinderpest epidemic
1896	Thlaping revolt (Langeberg) defeated by British
1897	Zululand annexed to Natal; Johannesburg Town Council (Stadsraad) established; Alfred Milner appointed high commissioner of southern Africa and governor of Cape Colony
1899 – 1902	The second Anglo-Boer War begins; South African ('Boer') War: British conquest of Transvaal and Orange Free State
1900	Emily Hobhouse visits South Africa to investigate concentration camp abuses
1902 – 5	'Reconstruction' of Transvaal and Free State under Milner
1902	Foundation of African People's Organisation (APO) in Cape Town; Treaty of Vereeniging ends South African War; Cecil John Rhodes dies; Britain confirms no vote for coloureds in Transvaal and Orange River colonies
1903	APO formed
1903 – 5	South African Native Affairs Commission recommends blueprint for segregation
1904	Paul Kruger dies in Switzerland
1904 – 7	Chinese indentured labourers used on gold mines
1905	Lagden Commission institutionalises racism (later known as

	apartheid) in South Africa; General Pass Regulations; Special Regulations for Labour Districts; Regulations for Controlling, Procuring and Engaging Native Labourers and their Management Teams; APO delegation to England to protest exclusion of non-whites from franchise in northern colonies
1906	Asiatic Registration Act (1) requires all Indians to register and carry passes
1907	Election victory of Het Volk (Transvaal) and Orangia Unie (Orange River Colony); Transvaal regains self-government
1906 – 8	Bambatha (Zulu) rebellion defeated
1908	Asiatic Registration Act (2) passed
1909	Non-white delegation to England to protest racial clauses in Union constitution
1910	Union of South Africa; The South Africa Act enfranchises whites, giving them complete political control over all other race groups; Coloureds excluded from franchise in northern provinces and from standing for parliament
1911	Mines and Works Act imposes colour bar in mines
1912	Foundation of South African Native National Congress (SANNC)(later ANC)
1913	Natives Land Act segregates land ownership and restricts African land ownership to the 'native reserves'; Indian general strike in Natal led by Gandhi
1913 – 14	White strikes on Rand
1914	South Africa enters First World War; Afrikaner rebellion; National Party founded; ANC appeals in vain to Britain for recognition of black rights; Gandhi leaves South Africa
1915	South African invasion of German South-West Africa
1918	Status Quo Act modifies job colour bar on mines; African municipal workers strike in Johannesburg; Foundation of Afrikaner Broederbond; Nelson Mandela born; Natives in Urban Areas Bill designed to force blacks into 'locations'
1919	Foundation of Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU); South West Africa (Namibia) comes under South African administration
1920	Native Affairs Act establishes separate administrative structures for Africans; African mine workers' strike; South African £ (ZAP) created at par with £ sterling
1921	Massacre of 'Israelites' at Bulhoek
1922	Rand Revolt
1923	Natives (Urban Areas) Act provides for urban segregation and African influx control; Industrial Conciliation Act excludes migrant workers from trade union representation
1924	Coalition of Labour and National Party win election: 'Pact' government under Hertzog; Afrikaans language given official recognition

1925	Afrikaans becomes second official language, after English; Hertzog declares that coloured people are part of the European nation
1926	Mines and Works Amendment Act extends employment colour bar; Colour Bar Act prevents blacks from practicing skilled trades; Hertzog's 'Coloured' Bills
1927	Native Administration Act 'retribalizes' African government and law
1930	White, but not coloured, women enfranchised
1930 – 3	Great Depression
1931	Act No. 35 makes it possible to challenge qualifications of non-white voters
1932	Native Service Contract Act restricts black labour tenants on white-owned farms; South Africa abandons gold standard
1934	South African Party (under Smuts) and National Party (under Hertzog) form coalition 'Fusion' government; Slums Act gives local municipalities right to move inhabitants of low-grade housing; Founding of United Party
1935	Formation of All African Convention (AAC)
1936	Native Land and Trust Act consolidates reserves; Representation of Natives Act removes Africans from Cape common franchise
1937	Marketing Act gives state subsidies to white farmers; Native Laws Amendment Act intensifies urban pass laws; Commission of Inquiry into coloured group
1938	Eufees centenary celebration of Great Trek mobilises Afrikaner nationalism
1939	Smuts plan to segregate coloureds residentially
1940 – 5	Rent and transport boycotts and squatter resistance on Rand
1941	Formation of Council for Non-European Trade Unions
1943	Non-European Unity Movement produces 'Ten Point Programme'; Foundation of ANC Youth League; Formation of CAC; Anti-CAD committee and NEUM formed to oppose CAC
1944	Formation of ANC Youth League
1946	African mine workers' strike
1946 – 7	Natal Indian Congress resists 'Ghetto' Act restricting Indian property ownership
1946	Sauer report recommends intensification of segregation
1948	'Herstigte' Nationalist Party forms government; National Party wins General Election; ARMSCOR founded
1949	ANC Youth League produces 'Programme of Action'; African and Indian conflict in Durban; Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act forbids marriage across colour or ethnic lines
1950	Race Classification introduced; Population Registration Act; Immorality Act; Group Areas Act; Suppression of Communism

	Act; Nelson Mandela leads ANC civil disobedience campaign
1951	Bantu Authorities Act; Separate Representation of Voters' Act transfers Coloureds to a separate voters' roll in the Cape
1952	Abolition of Passes and Coordination of Documents Act extends pass laws; ANC launches 'Defiance Campaign'
1953	Separate Amenities Act; Bantu Education Act; Criminal Law Amendment Act
1953 – 4	Resistance to destruction of Sophiatown
1955	Native (Urban Areas) Amendment Act extends urban influx control; National Congress of the People adopts 'Freedom Charter'
1956	Coloureds removed from Cape common franchise; Mass demonstration of women against pass laws; Mines and Works Act formalises racial discrimination in employment; Natives Act denies blacks the right of appeal against enforced removal; Mandela charged with high treason (charges dropped)
1956 – 61	Treason trial
1956 – 7	Rural revolts in Transvaal and Free State
1957	Alexandra bus boycotts; Native Laws Amendment Act 'Church Clause' allows for the expulsion of blacks from white church services
1958	Coloureds first election on separate voters' roll
1959	Foundation of Pan Africanist Congress (PAC); Promotion of Bantu Self-Governing Act sets up ethnic 'homelands'; Cato Manor (Durban) beerhall protests; Establishment of Union Council for Coloured Affairs
1960 – 69	Sharpeville shootings and State of Emergency; Banning of ANC, Communist Party and PAC; Pondoland revolt; South Africa excluded from Olympic Games
1961	Umkhonto we Sizwe guerrilla movement founded; Poqo revolt; South African leaves Commonwealth and becomes a Republic; Indemnity Act relieves all government official of any responsibility for the Sharpeville massacres; South African rand replaces South African £ at 2/1; Mandela heads ANC's new military wing, launching sabotage campaign; Robben Island becomes penal colony
1962	Sabotage Act allows for house arrest and banning not subject to challenge in courts
1963	General Laws Amendment Act permit detention without trial; Transkei holds first election
1964	Rivonia trials sentence ANC leaders to life imprisonment; Black Labour Act tightens influx control; First Act to establish CRC; Federal Party formed
1966	Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd assassinated; Labour Party officially formed
1967	Terrorism Act allows for indefinite detention without trial; Dr

	Chris Barnard performs world's first human heart transplant at Groote Schuur hospital, Cape Town
1968	UN renames South West Africa as Namibia; Revised Act to establish CRC; Four white MPs representing coloureds removed from parliament; Coloureds prohibited from belonging to white political parties
1969	Foundation of South African Students' Organisation (SASO) under Biko; First CRC election
1970	Bantu Homelands Act forcibly resettles more than 3 million blacks in homelands and compels them to become citizens of same
1971	Establishment of Black People's Convention (BPC); Black Homeland Citizenship Act changes the status of homeland inhabitants, robbing them of South African citizenship
1972	Britain goes off Gold Standard; South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland exit Sterling Monetary Area; Coloureds eliminated from municipal politics
1973 – 5	Widespread African strikes in Natal and eastern Cape
1975	Foundation of Inkatha under Buthelezi
1976	Revolt in Soweto and other townships; South African government introduces televisions; Kissinger meets Ian Smith in Pretoria
1977	Detention and murder of Biko; Banning of Black Consciousness organisations; UN institutes arms embargo against South Africa
1976 – 81	Nominal independence of homelands: Transkei (1976), Bophuthatswana (1977), Venda (1979), Ciskei (1981)
1978	PW Botha introduces 'total strategy' policy; Foundation of Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO); Miss World title won by Margaret Gardiner of South Africa
1979	Carlton Conference meeting of government and business leaders; Riekert Commission recommends easing of job colour bar; Wiehahn Commission recommends recognition of African trade unions; CRC sessions terminated
1980	CRC disbanded
1982	Formation of Conservative Party under Treurnicht; Black Local Authorities Act extends Community Council powers in townships
1983	Foundation of National Forum (NF) and United Democratic Front (UDF)
1984	Elections under new tricameral constitution widely boycotted by Indian and coloured voters; Township revolt begins; Government declares state of emergency; Koeberg, South Africa's first nuclear power plant, comes on line
1984 – 6	Widespread resistance; State of Emergency and troops moved into townships
1985	Foundation of Congress of South African Trade Unions

	(COSATU); International bank loans called in and sanctions intensified; Uitenhage shootings; National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) calls for 'People's Education'; Conflict in Inanda (Natal)
1986	Repeal of pass laws; Commonwealth delegation visit aborted by South African raids on neighbouring countries; Desmond Tutu elected first black bishop of Cape Town
1986 – 9	Widespread conflict between Inkatha and UDF in Natal
1988	KwaNdebele resistance to 'independence'
1989	Botha replaced by FW de Klerk; Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) launches civil disobedience campaign; Public facilities desegregated; Many ANC activists freed
1990	De Klerk unbans ANC, PAC and Communist Party; Nelson Mandela released from jail; Namibia obtains independence; Government unbans liberation movements
1991	Repeal of Group Areas, Land, and Population Registration Acts; Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) formed to negotiate democratic constitution; Government backing of Inkatha vigilantes against ANC; Start of multi-party talks; de Klerk repeals remaining apartheid laws
1992	White referendum supports CODESA negotiations but they break down and Inkatha – ANC conflict intensifies
1993	Negotiations resumed at Kempton Park to form interim constitution; Mandela and de Klerk share Nobel Peace Prize
1994	Government of National Unity elected with ANC majority; Mandela inaugurated as State President; Commonwealth membership restored; Sanctions lifted
1996	Parliament adopts new constitution; National Party withdraws from coalition
1996 – 8	Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings
1999	ANC wins overall electoral majority. Thabo Mbeki elected President
2001	ANC and New National Party announce a merger
2003	Walter Sisulu, a key figure in the anti-apartheid struggle, dies aged 91
2004	Ruling ANC wins landslide victory in general elections

APPENDIX IV

**TIME LINE ENCOMPASSING SOUTH AFRICAN SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST CHURCH DEVELOPMENT**

1873		Separate Coloured congregation formed by the DRC church in Boshoff, where Wessels and van Druten held their membership
1881		Separation of Wynberg DR Church into two congregations beginning of year into DR and DRM church
1881		August – Formal establishment of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in the Cape
1882		Establishment of Coloured DRC congregation in Beaconsfield
1892		Formation of the South African Conference
1893		Union College established
1901		move by Dutch-speaking members to form separate church for Dutch speakers (Swanepoel p 93).
1901		Much debate on Union College board as to allowing Coloured and African youth to be admitted as students
1902		Mission Conference formed encompassing Natal, Freestate and Transvaal territories
1903		Northern territories formed into Conference
1903		SAUC formed – F W Reaser first president
1904		Coloured primary school operated alongside the programme of the College
1908		T H Branch “agitated the racial issue among the Coloured members, creating considerable dissension.” Swanepoel 126
1909		Dutch breakaway group under Elfers requests reintegration after 7 yrs
1910		Formal establishment of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in the Free State
1913		Discussions take place to set up separate training school for

		Coloureds
1916		First Coloured School established in Parow. Closed shortly afterward
1916		CC Secretary's Records indicate three churches with almost exclusively Coloured membership – Salt River, Parow and Uitenhage; the latter designated as a “Coloured” church to distinguish it from “White” Uitenhage (check it out)
1917		Bethel Mission established
1918		Spion Kop established in Ladysmith. European students moved from Union College
1919		Special donations provided to establish separate ward for Coloureds at the Cape Sanitarium in Plumstead
1919		Need for African Division to relieve SAU from “these great mission problems “ (mission work in Africa) in order to focus on work amongst the Europeans in South Africa. October 16 AD formed.
1920		SAU relinquishes its leadership over black mission fields – The Zambezi Union Mission and the Southern Union Mission
1921		African Division inaugurated 21 Jan with W H Branson as president
1921		SAU session includes two Union Missions. Action in constitution that Native ordained ministers are to defer to white church elders, even if they are not ordained as ministers
1921		Statement by SAU and AD pledging loyalty to the government and disassociating themselves from any movements that influence the natives and add a burden to the government. Pledging to use influence to promote peace and loyalty to the government
1922		Bethel Training School established as training school for the Africans of South Africa
1923 June		coloured names separated in CC sec records and placed under heading of “Coloured Department.” Four Coloured churches at this time: Salt River, Parow, Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth
1925		Spion Kop, predecessor of Helderberg College, transferred to the African Division in order to focus on training European

		missionaries and ministers.
1925		Word "Native" dropped from credential cards for African employees; to be substituted with "Mission Department"
1925		CC record lists Whites, Coloureds, Blacks separately
1925		first attempt to separate members in Wynberg. Successfully resisted by White members.
1926		CC committee vote that Wynberg be considered a "White" Church despite 1925 resistance by White members to any kind of separation
1926		Union and Division vote that African work be separated from the Conferences and placed under "Mission" administrations headed by a superintendent
1926		black names disappear from CC records
1926 – Dec		Indian work removed from Conference and placed under Transvaal Delagoa Mission Field
1927 Jan 1		Kaffirland Mission Field formed
1928		establishment of Helderberg College for White students in Somerset West
1929		Black training school moved to Spion Kop which had been unfavourable for European students.
1929		establishment of Good Hope Training School for coloured students
1929		Kimberly church split with Coloureds remaining in Beaconsfield and a new white church formed
1929		Two black workers placed on Mission Committee for the first time. Could take part in all discussions but had to recuse themselves if matters pertaining to European workers were to be discussed.
1930		property for Good Hope Training School bought and school moved from Salt River Church to Riverside Farm
1930		Branson ends term as Division President 1 June 1930. J F Wright succeeds him.

1930		Action taken by SAUC and CC to set up separate organization for Coloured members
1930		Wynberg church split on racial grounds – Cape Conference EXCOM meeting Sept 8 & 9
1930		Action taken by SAU committee to “recognise that our native workers be permitted to travel 2 nd class on the South African Railways.”
1931		George church split with Elim being set up for coloured members
1931		Attempt to find alternative name to “Coloured Department”
1931		Recommendation to the GC that “African Division” change to “Southern African Division.”
1933		CC (including Coloured members) amalgamates with Natal-Transvaal conference to form SA conference due to depression years. Black fields (Transvaal/Delgoa Mission Field and the Kaffirland Mission Fields) merge to form The South African Mission Field.
1933		Coloured membership throughout SAUC placed directly under Union under the “Cape Coloured Administration.” Budget for 1934 refers to the “Cape Coloured Field.”
1934		SAU votes to become members of the South African Institute of Race Relations
1934		First permanent building built at Riverside – a house for the White principal
1935 Dec		SAC disbands and CC and N -T reconstituted <i>sans</i> the coloured membership which becomes the Cape Field. SAMF also disbands to become the North and South Bantu Mission Fields
1937		Statement of loyalty to government for their “their fidelity to the democratic traditions in the maintenance of civil and religious liberty for all of their subjects” while “deploring the decline of democratic principles, and the ever-increasing infringement over wide areas of the work of human liberties which have been rescued from the hand of tyranny at so great a cost, and recognizing more than ever that ‘Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty’”

1938		Black students move back from Spion Kop to Bethel Training School
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APPENDIX V

**COMPOSITE TIME LINE
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH AND POLITICAL TIME LINE**

EVENTS IN SOCIO-POLITICAL REALM IN SOUTH AFRICA		EVENTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SDA CHURCH	
1873	Separate Coloured congregation formed by the DRC church in Boshoff, where Wessels and van Druten held their membership		
1877	British annex Transvaal		
1878	British defeat Thlaping (Tswana) rebellion in Griqualand West; British annexes Walvis Bay; Paul Kruger visits London	1878	Hunt meets up with and converts J.H.C. Wilson to Adventism. Letter despatched to <i>Advent Review and Sabbath Herald</i>
1879	British invasion of Zululand; British defeat Pedi		
1879 – 85	Transkei annexed to Cape Colony		
1880	Griqualand West annexed to Cape Colony; Cape war with Sotho; Foundation of Afrikaner Bond (Cape); Boers rebel against British'; Commencement of First Anglo-Boer War		
1881	Separation of Wynberg DR		

	Church into two congregations beginning of year into White and Coloured congregations			
1881	August – Formal establishment of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in the Cape			
1881	Transvaal rebellion forces British withdrawal; Battle of Majuba ends in British defeat; First Anglo-Boer War ends; Rhodes becomes a member of the Cape Colony parliament			
1882	Establishment of Coloured DRC congregation in Beaconsfield			
1882	Foundation of Imbumba ya Manyama (eastern Cape)			
1884 – 5	British annex southern Bechuanaland			
1885	Kruger and Rhodes meet on the Vaal River	1885	Van Druten and Pieter Wessels meet Hunt. Wessels begins observing Sabbath Nov 28	
1886	Gold discovered on Witwatersrand (Johannesburg); Transvaal gold deposits established as richest in the world	1886	Letter to GC requesting Dutch minister	
1887	British annex Zululand	1887	First missionaries from USA arrive, July.	

			1887		First church formed with baptism of 21 members in Kimberly, Sept 27
1890		Kruger's Franchise Law denies political rights to Transvaal's uitlanders; Rhodes becomes prime minister of Cape Colony	1890		Pieter Wessels voted ministerial license. Consideration given to starting mission work among the African people
1891		Cape Town and Johannesburg linked by rail			
1892		Franchise and Ballot Act limits black vote by finance and education; Property franchise qualification raised and education test instituted	1892		Formation of the South African Conference, 8 December.
1893		Natal obtains Responsible Government; Gandhi arrives in South Africa	1893		Claremont Union College established, 1 February
1894		Glen Grey Act establishes separate land and tax system for Africans (eastern Cape); Natal Legislative Assembly Bill deprives Indians of the right to vote			
1895		Southern Bechuanaland annexed to Cape Colony; Transvaal government asserts control over Swaziland; Jameson Raid from Cape fails to topple Transvaal government	1895		Orphanage started, March. First SDA literature printed in Xhosa

1896 – 7		Rinderpest epidemic			
1896		Thlaping revolt (Langeberg) defeated by British			
1897		Zululand annexed to Natal; Johannesburg Town Council (Stadsraad) established; Alfred Milner appointed high commissioner of southern Africa and governor of Cape Colony	1897		Sanitarium opened, January
1899 – 1902		The second Anglo-Boer War begins; South African ('Boer') War: British conquest of Transvaal and Orange Free State			
1900		Emily Hobhouse visits South Africa to investigate concentration camp abuses			
			1901		Move by Dutch-speaking members to form separate church for Dutch speakers
			1901		Much debate on Union College board as to allowing Coloured and African youth to be admitted as students
1902 – 5		'Reconstruction' of Transvaal and Free State under Milner	1902		Mission Conference formed encompassing Natal, Free State and Transvaal territories
1902		Foundation of African People's Organisation (APO) in Cape Town; Treaty of Vereeniging ends South African War; Cecil John			

	Rhodes dies; Britain confirms no vote for coloureds in Transvaal and Orange River colonies			
1903	APO formed		1903	Second Conference, Natal-Transvaal Conference formed. South African Union Conference formed – F W Reaser president. South African Conference becomes Cape Colony Conference.
1903 – 5	South African Native Affairs Commission recommends blueprint for segregation			
1904	Paul Kruger dies in Switzerland		1904	Coloured primary school operated alongside the programme of the College
1904 – 7	Chinese indentured labourers used on gold mines			
1905	Lagden Commission institutionalises racism (later known as apartheid) in South Africa; General Pass Regulations; Special Regulations for Labour Districts; Regulations for Controlling, Procuring and Engaging Native Labourers and their Management Teams; APO delegation to England to protest exclusion of non-whites from franchise in northern colonies			
1906	Asiatic Registration Act (1) requires all Indians to register and carry passes			
1906 – 8	Bambatha (Zulu) rebellion defeated			

1907		Election victory of Het Volk (Transvaal) and Orangia Unie (Orange River Colony); Transvaal regains self-government			
1908		Asiatic Registration Act (2) passed	1908		T H Branch “agitated the racial issue among the Coloured members, creating considerable dissension.” Swanepoel 126
1909		Non-white delegation to England to protest racial clauses in Union constitution	1909		Dutch breakaway group under Elfers requests reintegration after 7 yrs
1910		Formal establishment of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in the Free State			
1910		Union of South Africa; The South Africa Act enfranchises whites, giving them complete political control over all other race groups; Coloureds excluded from franchise in northern provinces and from standing for parliament			
1911		Mines and Works Act imposes colour bar in mines			
1912		Foundation of South African Native National Congress (SANNC)(later ANC)			
1913		Natives Land Act segregates land ownership and restricts African land ownership to the	1913		Discussions take place to set up separate training school for

		'native reserves'; Indian general strike in Natal led by Gandhi			Coloureds
1913 – 14		White strikes on Rand		1913	Orange Free State Conference formed.
1914		South Africa enters First World War; Afrikaner rebellion; National Party founded; ANC appeals in vain to Britain for recognition of black rights; Gandhi leaves South Africa			
1915		South African invasion of German South-West Africa			
				1916	First Coloured School established in Parow. Closed shortly afterward
				1916	Cape Conference Secretary's Records indicate three churches with almost exclusively Coloured membership – Salt River, Parow and Uitenhage; the latter designated as a "Coloured" church to distinguish it from "White" Uitenhage (check it out)
				1917	Farm chosen in Butterworth by W. Claude Tarr for training school for Africans.
1918		Status Quo Act modifies job colour bar on mines; African municipal workers strike in Johannesburg; Foundation of		1918	Spion Kop established in Ladysmith. European students moved from Union College

		Afrikaner Broederbond; Nelson Mandela born; Natives in Urban Areas Bill designed to force blacks into 'locations'			
1919		Foundation of Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU); South West Africa (Namibia) comes under South African administration		1919	Special donations provided to establish separate ward for Coloureds at the Cape Sanitarium in Plumstead
				1919	Need for African Division to relieve SAU from "these great mission problems " (mission work in Africa) in order to focus on work amongst the Europeans in South Africa. October 16 AD formed. W.H. Branson president
1920		Native Affairs Act establishes separate administrative structures for Africans; African mine workers' strike; South African £ (ZAP) created at par with £ sterling		1920	SAU relinquishes its leadership over black mission fields – The Zambezi Union Mission and the Southern Union Mission
1921		Massacre of 'Israelites' at Bulhoek;		1921	Statement by SAU and AD pledging loyalty to the government and disassociating themselves from any movements that influence the natives and add a burden to the government. Pledging to use influence to promote peace and loyalty to the government. Disassociates themselves from the "Israelite" Movement.
				1921	SAU session includes two Union Missions. Action in constitution that Native ordained ministers are to defer to white church elders, even if

					they are not ordained as ministers.
1922		Rand Revolt		1922	Bethel Training School established as training school for the Africans of South Africa
1923		Natives (Urban Areas) Act provides for urban segregation and African influx control; Industrial Conciliation Act excludes migrant workers from trade union representation		1923 June	Coloured names separated in Cape Conference Secretary's records and placed under heading of "Coloured Department." Four Coloured churches at this time: Salt River, Parow, Uitenhage and Port Elizabeth
1924		Coalition of Labour and National Party win election: 'Pact' government under Hertzog; Afrikaans language given official recognition			
1925		Afrikaans becomes second official language, after English; Hertzog declares that coloured people are part of the European nation		1925	Spion Kop, predecessor of Helderberg College, transferred to the African Division in order to focus on training European missionaries and ministers.
				1925	Word "Native" dropped from credential cards for African employees; to be substituted with "Mission Department"
				1925	Cape Conference record lists Whites, Coloureds, Blacks separately
				1925	First attempt to separate

					members in Wynberg. Successfully resisted by White members.
1926		Mines and Works Amendment Act extends employment colour bar; Colour Bar Act prevents blacks from practicing skilled trades; Hertzog's 'Coloured' Bills		1926	Cape Conference committee vote that Wynberg be considered a "White" Church despite 1925 successful resistance by White members to any kind of separation
				1926	Union and Division vote that African work be separated from the Conferences and placed under "Mission" administrations headed by a superintendent
				1926	Black names disappear from CC records
				1926 Dec	Indian work removed from Conference and placed under Transvaal Delagoa Mission Field
1927		Native Administration Act 'retribalizes' African government and law		1927 Jan 1	Kaffirland Mission Field formed
				1928	Establishment of Helderberg College for White students in Somerset West
				1929	Black training school moved to Spion Kop which had been unfavourable for European students.
				1929	Establishment of Good Hope

					Training School for coloured students
				1929	Kimberly church split with Coloureds remaining in Beaconsfield and a new white church formed
				1929	Two black workers placed on Mission Committee for the first time. Could take part in all discussions but had to recuse themselves if matters pertaining to European workers were to be discussed.
1930		White, but not coloured, women enfranchised		1930	Property for Good Hope Training School bought and school moved from Salt River Church to Riverside Farm
				1930	W.H. Branson ends term as Division President 1 June 1930. J F Wright succeeds him.
				1930	Action taken by SAUC and CC to set up separate organization for Coloured members
				1930	Wynberg church split on racial grounds – Cape Conference EXCOM meeting Sept 8 & 9

APPENDIX VI

ILLUSTRATIONS OF “PETTY” RACISM IN SOUTH AFRICA AND WITHIN THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

A. In 1976 the late Pastor D A Douman and I – two young ministers serving with Pastor C J Theron – were waiting outside a store in Oudtshoorn on a hot summers day for our mentor to complete his purchases of one or two household requirements. A young lad, no older than 5yrs, was standing to one side enjoying his packet of sweets. We were concerned at him standing outside on his own and enquired of him as to where his parents were.

With the complete trust of a child, he responded by saying that his mom was in the store. He then proceeded to offer a sweet to Pastor Douman. Once again we expressed concern at him being alone and talking to strangers, enquiring from him as to whether his mom had instructed him not to talk to “vreemde mense” – to strangers.

This 5yr old white Afrikaans speaking child looked up at us with all the innocence of childhood and responded: “My ma het gesê ek moet nie met vreemde mense praat nie; maar julle is nie mense nie – julle is diere.” (My mother told me not to speak to strange people; but you are not ‘people’ – you are animals.)

B. An Educators’ Conference was held on the campus of Helderberg College in the late 1960’s. My father, an educational administrator with a MA in Educational Administration and Counselling with close on to 30 years service in church school employ at the time, attended the conference. He was the only coloured participant.

When it was time for lunch, all the participants proceeded to the campus cafeteria. As he approached the entrance, he was politely directed to make his way around the back of the cafeteria and to enter through the kitchen entrance. There he was shown to a table in the kitchen where he was given a metal plate and a metal spoon with which to have his meal.

His fellow-attendees sat inside the dining room with table cloths, cutlery and glass ware.

The same College, upon eventually allowing 4th yr coloured theology students to study on campus by 1974, would not allow those students to visit a fellow student – white – in the hostels, or to eat in the cafeteria; even if it was only their own sandwiches. While in the classroom the students would pour over the epistles of John in order to understand how to fully experience and exemplify God's love, they were not allowed to share the same facilities on the church college campus.⁴

C. Pastor Yaze, a senior minister from the Eastern Cape, was an attendee at a combined ministerial employees meeting of the Cape Conference, Good Hope Conference and Southern Conference held in the mid-80's at the Hartenbos campsite belonging to the Cape Conference. A very jovial and, sometimes, jocular, individual who was gifted in music, he 'entertained' the ministers during song service time with his very vigorous and animated singing sessions.

⁴ This story was recounted to me by my father.

At the last meeting of the convocation he got up to speak. His opening phrase – “The other day, as few years ago . . .” – was met with much mirth. The assembled ministers assumed that he was about to regale them once again with some amusing anecdote. He went on “. . . I was travelling down from the Eastern Cape with a group of fellow workers on our way to Cape Town. We realized that we were not going to reach our destination that day. However, we were not overly concerned as we knew that our white brothers had a camp site at Hartenbos and were sure we would be able to sleep there for the night and carry on the next morning. It was rather late when we arrived at the gate, which we found locked. We hooted, flashed our lights and called out for assistance. We noticed that the caretaker’s house, which was next to the gate, was well lit.



One of our number climbed over the gate to summons assistance. When he was able to rouse the caretaker, he was curtly informed that our group would not be allowed to sleep there – it was for whites only. He had to climb back over the gate. What to do now. Being tired from the long drive, we decided it would be best to get some sleep before we proceeded. So there we slept. Some of us in the landrover we were driving; some of us under the landrover. Outside the gates of Hartenbos, with its dormitories standing empty. We were church workers – ministers and teachers – and this was property belonging to our brothers.”

By this time any laughter that there might have been had died down completely. The now-sombre audience listened to this man telling his story – no bitterness, no recriminations, no anger. Just a deep sadness in his eyes. And then he delivered his

punch line: “I am glad that this time when I came to Hartenbos, I was allowed to sleep this side of the gate.”⁵

D. A camp meeting took place for the Cape Conference members in the late 1940’s. Not having their own campsite at the time, they rented a venue. Two ministers of the Cape Field had heard about the gathering and had decided to visit to confirm a rather interesting report regarding the venue.

When they arrived with their camera, they found the reports to be true: At the entrance – admittedly not erected by the Cape Conference but by the owners of the facility – was a sign which read: “No dogs and coloureds allowed.” They posed for photos in front of the sign. They were seen and encouraged to leave. The incident was duly reported to the South African Union and the Cape Field officers.

The two offending ministers were called in and suspended from employment. They were Pastor Kenneth Landers, and Pastor A.G. Kohen. Interestingly enough, the two were instructed to apologise for their inciteful behaviour. Pastor Landers dutifully apologised for his ‘scandalous’ behaviour. Pastor Kohen did not, as he believed he had done nothing wrong except for exposing what appeared to be tacit acceptance and support for the discrimination and racism reflected in the notice. Landers was reinstated shortly after that and went on to become the first president of the Good Hope Conference. Kohen found himself outside of church employ for a period of

⁵ I was present at this meeting and have reported the story in the first person in as much as I can recall the incident. I have verified my account with others who were there as well who have corroborated the account.

time and at loggerheads with the “bretheren” for much of the rest of his time in the employ of the church.⁶

E. The year 1986 saw South Africa troubled by boycotts, riots and protests, with a severe clampdown by the security forces under the terms of the state of emergency. One of the members of the church, a youth and choir leader, fell afoul of the “comrades”⁷ due to his having worked for the local municipal authority. He was seen as a collaborator with the white nationalist government.⁸ This led him to resign his position. However, the comrades were not satisfied.

One evening they surrounded his house, demanding that he come out or have the entire family bear the brunt of their anger. He went out to talk to them and to assure them that he was no longer working for the local authority. They refused to listen to reason. His family – mother, father and younger siblings – watched transfixed from the crack in the curtain as he was tied to a tree opposite his house and necklaced.⁹ As the fire subsided, the comrades danced and chanted in front of the house, promising to come back the next evening to finish off the job – that was to burn the house down with his family members inside.

The local pastor, MacDonald Mgedezi, called me early the next morning and requested that we meet each other in town. I could hear by the tone of his voice that he was extremely agitated. When we met in my car outside the Checkers

⁶ This story was recounted to me by Ivy Kohen, daughter of Pastor A.G. Kohen.

⁷ “Comrades” was a term used as a general term for those who were participants in the struggle against the apartheid government. It was used more specifically for those youth who became involved in the struggle post 1976.

⁸ Members of the young man’s family are now members of the merged Cape Conference. One of his relatives serves as a member of the Cape Conference and South African Union Conference Executive Committees. This is probably the first time they will learn of the then Cape Conference involvement in (or rather, lack thereof) the saga.

⁹ Necklacing was a practice adopted of placing a car tyre doused in petrol around the neck of a “collaborator” and setting it alight.

Supermarket, he recounted the story of the previous evening. He expressed his concern for the family – especially for their safety.

We arranged for the family to be taken to my home in as unobtrusive a manner as possible, cognizant of the fact that the comrades could decide to target my home for offering shelter to the family. After a few days, while arrangements were being made to take the body of the young man to the home town of his family for burial, we were informed by the community grapevine that the comrades suspected the family was with me. We moved them to another church member's home.

That evening I called the president of the Cape Conference, Hein Strydom, and sketched the situation to him. I enquired as to whether we transfer the family to Hartenbos, 45 km away, under cover of darkness and shelter them in one of the empty dormitory rooms for a few days until they were ready to leave for their hometown. We negotiated the terms of the request: they would remain out of sight during the day; they would sleep and have their meals in their rooms; they would conduct themselves at all times in such a manner so as not to attract any attention to themselves; no-one other than myself and the conference officers would know of their whereabouts.

He listened sympathetically to the story and promised to call back within a short while. This he did. Having contacted the members of his executive committee for counsel, he informed me that, regrettably, they were not willing to place the church campsite at risk in order to help this traumatised family who had witnessed their son being murdered in front of their door. It was in order for me or one of the other

members to risk their and their families' lives, but the camp site – unoccupied at the time – could not shelter them.

Sequel: The local church close to where the young man stayed offered shelter to families whose houses had been destroyed during the unrest. The church was burnt to the ground by the comrades. The pile of smouldering ashes, twisted window frames and broken glass bore testimony to a church who said “You were without shelter and we took you in; naked and we clothed you; hungry and we gave you food.” Down the road, 45 km away, the same church said: “We can’t put our buildings at risk – sorry, we cannot take you in.”



APPENDIX VII

“UNITY BETWEEN EUROPEAN AND AFRICAN WORKERS”

VOTED that we adopt the following statement in regard to achieving greater unity between African and European workers and that it be placed in the manuscript, “Ye are all One in Christ” which is given to new missionaries in the Division:

This is the time above all others when the closest understanding and confidence should prevail between all races within the Church. In a continent rife with racial hate and rent by strife and division, in an atmosphere charged with suspicion and mistrust, and while gross darkness descends upon men, the message of the church in regard to relations of man with man is to be clearer than ever. In this situation the truth that all men are one in Christ takes on, if possible, an even greater importance than in other lands. Primarily it is not a truth men must hear. It is one which Africa must see demonstrated and exemplified.

We sense that the hour is late. Attitudes are hardening rapidly and what aroused no feeling a few years ago, today is almost impossible to control. There are aspects of the African situation beyond our control but there are areas in which care and thought could contribute much. It is therefore

RECOMMENDED: That our missionaries and conference workers be earnestly encouraged to take upon their hearts the burden of doing all in their power to bring about, develop and maintain that relationship of spiritual unity between themselves

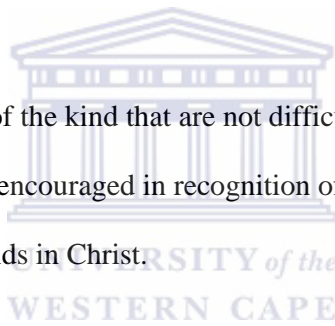
and their fellow-workers and members of all races which it is the will of God shall exist in a world torn and divided in the agonies of its last days; and that in doing this the following important items receive attention:

- a. The acceptance deep within mind and heart that all men saved and unsaved, are worthless and without hope apart from Christ, but are clothed with heavenly dignity and value beyond computation by His cross.
- b. That, therefore, that attitude toward men of different race from ourselves, which, while professing to be in harmony with the gospel, is patronizing and condescending is as much “not according to Christ” as the other which puts a difference in its treatment of men of different races.
- c. That while we cannot on the one hand delay the bearing of burdens of leadership and responsibility in the Church by Africans today, neither dare we, on the other, fail to do all we can to prepare them for tasks even beyond what we envisage possible or likely tomorrow.
- d. That the time may not be far distant when on the basis of worth and experience and under the guidance of God through circumstances, African leaders may have to bear greater responsibilities than some of their European missionary brethren who will serve under them.
- e. That in all our dealing with our brethren the respect and honour that becomes souls purchased with the blood of Christ be accorded them, no matter where

we are in private or in public, in church, in social contacts, on busy city streets, in travel, on committees, and that the Christian maturity of senior and experienced African ministers and workers always be recognized and respected.

- f. That customs and practices of a past era that give offence today be studiously avoided and that expressions repugnant to the African such as “natives” and “boy” and “girl” in reference to servants, not be used and that children particularly be taught to be respectful toward Africans both before them and in reference to them.

- g. That social contacts of the kind that are not difficult and awkward to either group be judiciously encouraged in recognition of the fact of a common salvation and our bonds in Christ.



- i. (sic) That differences between ministers of the different races not be emphasized by use of “elder” in reference to one group and “pastor” to the other. Colour makes no difference in the ordination or standing of a Christian minister.¹⁰

¹⁰ SAUC S1/1158/315/61, CC 132/55/62.

APPENDIX VIII

HELDERBERG COLLEGE – POST FACTO DIPLOMAS

(Extract from the President's report to Council, October 2007 and Statement read by the registrar, Mr R Austen at the awarding of the *post facto* diplomas to Alwyn du Preez and Robert Hall by Helderberg College, November, 2007)

Extract from President's Report

Awarding of Post Facto Degrees

Arising from a recommendation from the Alumni Association Executive Committee, the Senate has voted to award, *post facto*, the Bachelor of Arts Degree (Theology) to Pastor Alwyn du Preez and Pastor Robert Hall. These alumni completed their courses of study in 1968 and 1971 respectively. Due to the policy of racial segregation which was practiced by the College at the time, they were not allowed by the College to graduate during the regular graduation exercises of their respective years. They had to go to a sister institution, Good Hope College, to receive their diplomas from the Helderberg College registrar. Now, after 39 and 36 years respectively, we have the opportunity, even if only symbolically, of allowing these students to receive their diplomas at a *bona fide* College graduation.

Statement read by the Registrar

In 1996, Helderberg College, under the presidency of Pastor Dave Allen, issued an apology which was printed in the *Maranatha*, recognizing the hurt caused due to the policies of the College, based on the national policy, in excluding students on the basis of race, nationality, gender or finance.

Today, as the College celebrates its 80th graduation on this campus, we wish to apologise to two students who were registered at this College, successfully completed their required course work, but could not graduate at this institution. They were required to graduate at a sister institution and have the registrar of Helderberg College hand them their diplomas.

Today they are both present. Thirty nine and thirty six years ago respectively, they were not able to take part in the graduation. Today we would like to invite them both to come to the front. Pastor A G du Preez and Pastor R Hall, could you please come up to the podium.



APPENDIX IX

JUDGMENT: COURT CASE IN BLOEMFONTEIN HIGH COURT:
OCTOBER 2009

From: SYMINGTON & DE KOK

051 4304806

12/10/2009 08:42 #236 P.001/033



SYMINGTON & DE KOK
ATTORNEYS • PROKUREURS • BABUELEDI
Solutions that fit • Oplossings wat pas • Ditbarabalo tse di Isengang

**MNRE DU PLESSIS DE HEUS &
VAN WYK
BENONI**

DATE/DATUM
2009-10-12

VAT/BTW REG NO. 4620106841

PER FAKS: 086 530 6804

YOUR REF/U VERW
MR VAN WYK/AR

OUR REF/ONS VERW
PAC JACOBS/jc/LT0479

Waarde heer

SEWENDE DAG ADVENTISTE KERK

Ons verwys na bostaande en heg hierby aan afskrif van die getikte uitspraak vir u rekorddoeleindes.

Ons wag op u instruksies.

Die uwe

**SYMINGTON & DE KOK
PER: PAC JACOBS**

E-pos: jcombrinck@symok.co.za

Direkte faks: 086 587 2316

BLOEMFONTEIN
NELSON MANDELA DRIVE/RYLAAN 1698, BLOEMFONTEIN
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PARTNERS/VENNOTE: STEVE COETZEE • PHILIP JACOBS, LEON STRATING, GERHARD VAN GRAAN, DE BRYS HUMAN, HERI CARSHAGEN, THELME WOLMARANS, ETHELNE VAN ZYL, CHESSIE BEUKES, GILES REHBOCK, PIERRE JOUBERT, ANGELO RAYNARD, WILLIAM RAMOHELO, PETER ISOTIISI, BRENDA MOHALE, JANINE FOUCHÉ*, ELNA POHL, TONIE O'REILLY, MC JACOBS *
ASSOCIATES/ASSOSIATE: PIET SWANHOEEL

ASSISTED BY/RYGISTAAN DEUR: LELAHNE VAN BLERK, KUTZ MAIB, GWEN JOHNSTONE, DIEFERINK MÖLLER, STEFANI SLABBERT
FIN. MANAGER/BESTUURDER RIANA NEL FT MANAGER/BESTUURDER FRANCIS HORR
Certified as BBBEE compliant cert no Q09P00052

FREE STATE HIGH COURT, BLOEMFONTEIN
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Case No.: 3966/2006

In the case between:

<u>THE HERMANUS CONGREGATION OF THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH</u> (withdrawn)	First Plaintiff
<u>THE STRAND CONGREGATION OF THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH</u> (withdrawn)	Second Plaintiff
<u>THE LICHTENBURG CONGREGATION OF THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH</u>	Third Plaintiff
<u>THE NYLSTROOM CONGREGATION OF THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH</u>	Fourth Plaintiff
<u>THE TZANEEN CONGREGATION OF THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH</u>	Fifth Plaintiff
<u>THE ELLISRAS CONGREGATION OF THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH</u>	Sixth Plaintiff
<u>THE JOHANNESBURG NORTH CONGREGATION OF THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH</u>	Seventh Plaintiff
<u>THE PIETERSBURG CONGREGATION OF THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH</u>	Eighth Plaintiff
<u>RENIER TREDOUX</u>	Ninth Plaintiff
<u>ANDRE BENJAMIN VAN DER SCHYFF</u>	Tenth Plaintiff
<u>ANTONIE MICHAEL MULLER</u>	Eleventh Plaintiff
<u>DAVID STEPHANUS JACOBS</u>	Twelve Plaintiff
<u>JOHN ERNEST PITCHFORD</u>	Thirteenth Plaintiff
<u>NICOLAAS PETRUS PRINSLOO</u>	Fourteenth Plaintiff

and

<u>THE SOUTHERN AFRICA UNION CONFERENCE OF THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH</u>	First Defendant
<u>THE SOUTHERN AFRICA INDIAN OCEAN DIVISION OF THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH</u>	Second Defendant
<u>THE CAPE CONFERENCE OF THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH</u>	Third Defendant

THE SOUTHERN HOPE CONFERENCE Fourth Defendant
OF THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
THE TRANSVAAL CONFERENCE OF THE Fifth Defendant
SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
THE TRANS ORANGE CONFERENCE OF THE Sixth Defendant
SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

CORAM: VAN DER MERWE, J

JUDGMENT: VAN DER MERWE, J

HEARD ON: 3, 4, 6 FEBRUARY 2009,
7 AND 8 SEPTEMBER 2009

DELIVERED ON: 8 OCTOBER 2009

- [1] This action concerns a dispute within the ranks of the Seventh Day Adventist Church ("the church").
- [2] The church is a worldwide ecclesiastical body. For present purposes its organisational structure can be summarised as follows. The church is organised in a representative system, as opposed to for instance a congregational or papal system. In a congregational system, the congregations are to a large extent independent whereas in a papal system on the other hand, the authority of the church to a large extent vests in the pope. The church

therefore has a hierarchy where lower levels are represented in higher levels. The highest authority of the church is the General Conference in session. The General Conference conducts its work through divisions. Each division embraces all the union conferences granted the status of union conference by the General Conference, that are situated within the specific geographical area assigned to the division in question. A union conference consists of all the local conferences that had been granted the status of local conference by the union conference in question in session, that are situated within the specifically defined geographical area of the union conference in question. A local conference consists of all the congregations recognised by the local conference, that are situated within the specifically defined geographical area of the local conference. Members of the church belong to or worship at congregations. Congregations are represented by their delegates in local conferences and local conferences represented by their delegates in union conferences and so forth.

[3] The business of all the conferences of the church are dealt with at periodical general or special meetings, referred to as business sessions. Regular business sessions of a local conference take place at three-year intervals whereas regular business sessions of a union conference take place every five years. Between sessions of a specific conference, the executive committee thereof is authorised to conduct the affairs of the conference. A business session of a congregation is a meeting of all the members of the congregation that are present. A congregation business session mandates the church board of the congregation in important matters but the church board generally acts as executive committee of the congregation.

[4] The most important documents of the church setting out the governance, organisation and administration of the church are the General Conference working policy as amended from time to time at General Conference business sessions, as well as the church manual. The working policy of the General Conference and the church manual are binding on all structures and members of the church and constitutes the constitution of the church as a

whole. It is common cause that the divisions, union conferences and local conferences of the church are separate legal persons capable of suing and being sued.

[5] At the commencement of the trial the first and second plaintiffs withdrew their respective actions against the defendants. As a result, as was properly conceded by counsel for the plaintiffs at the end of the trial, no order can be granted against or in respect of the bodies cited as the third and fourth defendants. Where necessary, these bodies will for the sake of convenience be referred to as the Cape Conference and Southern Hope Conference respectively. Of the defendants only the first and second defendants were represented before me. Unless indicated otherwise, a reference in this judgment to the defendants must be understood as referring to the first and second defendants.

[6] The third to eight plaintiffs ("the congregations") are congregations of the church. The ninth to fourteenth plaintiffs ("the members") are members of the church who at the time of institution of the action belonged to each of

the congregations. The members were joined as plaintiffs as a result of an application made immediately before close of the case for the plaintiffs. By that time, all the members had already testified before me. It is clear that the members were joined as plaintiffs as a cautionary measure, in the event of a finding that the congregations have no *locus standi iudicio* in this matter.

[7] The fifth defendant ("the TC") is a local conference. All the congregations fall within the territorial area of the TC. The sixth defendant ("the TOC") is also cited as a local conference. Both the TC and the TOC fall within the territorial area and under the auspices of the first defendant ("the union conference"). The union conference in turn is part of the second defendant ("the division"), a division of the General Conference of the church as explained above.

[8] There are two main issues for decision. The first is whether any of the plaintiffs has *locus standi iudicio* to bring the action. The second is whether a resolution taken by a business session of the union conference on 20 November 2005 ("the resolution") was taken *ultra vires* the powers of

the union conference in terms of the constitution of the church and is therefore invalid in terms of common law.

[9] Several witnesses testified on behalf of the plaintiffs. Apart from the members, these witnesses included pastor C A E Botha, pastor D C Spencer and Dr A B D Ficker. Pastor Botha was the president of the TC for four terms, that is 12 years, up to November 2007. In November 2007 pastor Spencer was elected the president of the TC. He is therefore the current president of the TC. Dr Ficker was called as an expert witness who was also involved in many meetings of structures of the church leading to the resolution. I do not find it necessary to summarise the evidence of the witnesses on behalf of the plaintiff. The credibility of the witnesses is not in question. I will make reference to the material evidence in the discussion below. After an application for absolution from the instance by the defendants was dismissed, the defendants closed their case.

[10] The term *locus standi iudicio* is used in two senses. In its primary sense it denotes the capacity to litigate. It is in my

judgment properly called its primary sense, as in the absence of capacity to litigate, *locus standi iudicio* in the secondary sense does not arise. *Locus standi iudicio* in its secondary sense refers to whether the party in question has a sufficient interest in the subject matter of the case for its claim (or defence) to be heard by the court.

- [11] The plaintiffs claim that the congregations are *universitates* at common law and that they have a direct interest in the relief claimed in the action. Both these averments are disputed by the defendants. In the light of the view that I take on the merits of the matter, it is not strictly necessary to decide this point. However, as the matter appears to be of importance to the parties and the church and as a lot of evidence in argument were presented to me in this regard, I believe that I should make a finding thereon. An *universitas* is of course a separate legal person. It is trite that in order for an association to qualify as an *universitas* it must have perpetual succession and must be capable of owning property apart from its members. See **MORRISON v STANDARD BUILDING SOCIETY** 1932 AD 229 at 238; **AAIL (SA) v MOSLEM JUDICIAL COUNCIL** 1983 (4) SA

850 (C) at 861; AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND ANOTHER v LOMBO 1997 (3) SA 187 (AD) at 195I – 196B.

[12] It is not disputed that the congregations have perpetual succession. The undisputed evidence is that the members of the congregations come and go, but the congregations remain in place. A number of the congregations have been in continued existence for more than 50 years.

[13] In terms of church policy the fixed properties of the church all over the world are held in separate entities in trust for the church. In South Africa this entity is Sedcom, an association incorporated in terms of section 21 of the Companies Act, No. 61 of 1973. Therefore the fixed properties used by the congregations are all registered in the name of Sedcom. This led to an argument on behalf of the defendants that as the congregations are incapable of holding fixed property in their own names, they cannot be *universitates*. In support of this argument reliance was placed on the decision in INTERIM WARD S19 COUNCIL v PREMIER, WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE, AND

OTHERS 1998 (3) SA 1056 (C). In this decision at 1060H – I the aforesaid characteristics of an *universitas* were restated with the addition that what is required in respect of property is the capacity to own landed property. This statement appears to be based solely on **LEVIN v TRANSVAAL MINERS' ASSOCIATION** 1912 WLD 144 where at 147 only the following was said in this regard:

“Now, this is not a body incorporated by law. Is it, then, an *universitas*? The essentials of an *universitas* were discussed in the case of *Webb and Co Ltd v Northern Rifles* (1908, TS 462). Those essentials clearly are not present in connection with the defendant Association. It has no perpetual succession, and there is no provision for its holding landed property apart from its members, and clearly, therefore, it is an unincorporated body.”

- [14] In the cited *locus classicus* of **WEBB AND CO LTD v NORTHERN RIFLES** 1908 TS 462 it was not stated that the capacity to hold immovable property is a requirement for an association to be an *universitas*. I have been unable to find any other authority for this proposition. See also **MORRISON v STANDARD BUILDING SOCIETY**, *supra*

where at 234 – 237 the Roman Law and Roman-Dutch Law were discussed. With respect I see no reason why a voluntary association which in terms of its constitution or otherwise may not hold immovable property in its own name but has perpetual succession and holds all its property apart from its members, may not be regarded as a *universitas*. Perhaps the best way to illustrate this is to point out that the constitution of the union conference provides that immovable property acquired by or on behalf of the union conference shall be held in trust for the union conference by Sedcom. Although the union conference therefore also may not hold immovable property in its own name, it is, rightly, common cause that it is an *universitas*.

[15] It appears from the evidence that the payment of tithes by members is an important principle of the church and that all tithes received by congregations must be paid over to the relevant local conference. However, offerings apart from tithes are also received by congregations. A portion of these offerings are retained by the congregation. In the case of larger congregations such as Johannesburg-North and Pietersburg, the offerings retained by the congregation

constitute substantial amounts. According to the evidence, the congregations hold property and incur rights and obligations apart from their membership. Mention was made in the evidence of purchases by the congregations of items such as furniture, organs, computers and audio and video equipment. All the congregations operate current accounts and some have investment accounts, all in their own names. The congregations contract in their own names for instance when entering into rental agreements, including rental of fixed properties, agreements for the supply of water and electricity for the congregations and employment contracts with employees of the congregations. The church manual explicitly recognises that the offerings retained are the property of the congregation and that the congregation shall utilise that *inter alia* to comply with its contractual obligations. The church manual provides as follows in respect of congregations:

"Local church funds include such funds as church expense, church building and repair funds, and the church fund for the poor and needy. These funds belong to the local church and

are disbursed by the treasurer only by authorisation of the church board or church business meetings. However, the church treasurer shall pay from the church expense funds all bills for local church expense authorised by the church board, such as rentals, janitor, water, light, fuel, insurance, paving assessments, etc. The treasurer should be careful to secure receipts for all bills paid."

- [16] It is not disputed by the defendants that each congregation holds funds and property and incurs rights and obligations apart from its membership. The argument on behalf of the defendants, although not termed so specifically, boils down thereto that the congregations are controlled to such an extent by the relevant local conference that the congregations cannot have separate existence. In this regard reference was made thereto that the congregations do not have constitutions of their own and that the congregations were unable to point to a provision in the working policy or church manual that clothes them with legal personality. Reference was also made to the representative system of the church, the fact that the pastors that work in the congregations are employed by the relevant local conference and that the tithes that have to be

paid over to the local conference, form the major portion of the income derived by the congregations from their members. Reference was also made to signing powers of the local conference treasurer in respect of the bank accounts of the congregations. For the reasons that follow, I do not agree with this argument.

- [17] Only the tenth and eleventh plaintiffs recognised the existence of a policy that the local conference treasurer must have signing powers on the congregation's bank accounts. It is clear from the evidence of the eleventh plaintiff as a whole that he has no real knowledge of these matters. The tenth plaintiff stated emphatically that no such policy is implemented in practice. This was *inter alia* confirmed by the thirteenth plaintiff, who is actually the treasurer of the Johannesburg-North congregation and who whilst unaware of such policy, pointed out that such policy would be contrary to provisions of the church manual such as the one quoted above. To my mind the representative system, the employment of pastors by the relevant local conference and the payment of tithes to the local conference do not take the matter further. The test

remains whether the congregations have perpetual succession and own property apart from their members. In order to determine the presence of these requirements one must look in the first instance at the constitution of an association. If it is not possible to determine these matters by reference to the constitution, regard must be had to the nature and object of the association. See **AAIL(SA) v MOSLEM JUDICIAL COUNCIL**, *supra* at 61C and **INTERIM WARD S19 COUNCIL v PREMIER, WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE**, *supra* at 1061A – B. In the present case the constitution of the congregations, namely the General Conference working policy and church manual, is silent on this matter. However, a consideration of the nature and object of the congregations as set out above, in my judgment establishes that they are *universitates* and therefore capable of suing in own name.

- [18] As appears from what is stated above, the local conference to which a congregation of the church belongs, plays a major role in the affairs of the congregation. There is also an important element of trust involved in the relationship between the local conference and the congregation. A

decision to dissolve the local conference and to bring into being a new local conference, would have a direct impact on the congregation. Therefore, if such decision is *ultra vires* and invalid, as the congregations maintain, the congregation in my judgment have a sufficient interest in challenging the decision, within the meaning thereof in **JACOBS EN 'N ANDER v WAKS EN ANDERE** 1992 (1) SA 521 (AD) at 533J and further. See also **FEDSURE LIFE ASSURANCE LTD AND OTHERS v GREATER JOHANNESBURG TRANSITIONAL METROPOLITAN COUNCIL AND OTHERS** 1998 (2) SA 1115 (SCA) at 1121 – 1122. I regard the case relied on by counsel for the defendants in this regard, namely **EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA (WESTERN DIOCESE) v SEPENG AND ANOTHER** 1988 (3) SA 958 (BGD), as clearly distinguishable on the facts and therefore there is no need to discuss it further. This conclusion renders it unnecessary to determine whether the members also have such sufficient interest in the matter.

[19] I now turn to the merits. The resolution consists of the acceptance in full on 20 November 2005 by the union conference business session of the following recommendation to it (SAU refers to the Union Conference):

**"RECOMMENDATION TO SAU BUSINESS SESSION HELD
19/20 NOVEMBER, 2005**

The Executive Committee of the Southern Africa Indian Ocean Division held on 7 November, 2005 in action 00/00/05 approved the recommendation of the SAU Executive Committee action 379/115/05 for the implementation of the following:

That the model voted on the 17 March, 2002, detailing the realignment of conference boundaries in Southern Africa be implemented for the following conferences:

- I. Northern Conference – Limpopo Province, Gauteng, NW Province, Mphumalanga
- II. Cape Conference – E/Cape, W/Cape, N/Cape (TOC), St Helena Island) (including TOC churches in the N/Cape)
- III. KNFC Conference – Shall include TOC churches in the Free State

That the SAU Executive Committee recommends an amendment of the SAU constitution to reflect the new restructuring as in Conference I, II, III above.

A. The SAU Executive Committee recommends to the SAU Business Session that the conference boundaries within its territory be restructured as per action 140/35/02 of 17 March, 2002 of Special Business Session and that the implementation shall be as follows:

1. The SAU Business Session, 20 November, 2005, will be asked to reaffirm realignment of conference boundaries.

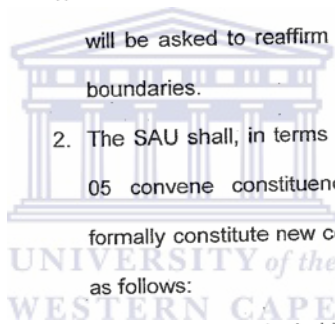
2. The SAU shall, in terms of GC Working Policy B65 05 convene constituency meetings in order to formally constitute new conferences as per A above as follows:

* Conference I to be held on 19 March 2006

* Conference II to be held on 26 March 2006

3. Affected constituencies in the territory of the restructured conferences shall have an opportunity to align themselves with the restructured conference design by the timelines stipulated herein-above.

4. Where such alignment as envisaged above is not realised by the said date, the restructured conferences shall come into effect and be



constituted on the basis of membership in that territory.

5. Should there be churches/members that do not align themselves by the said date, the newly formed conferences shall set up appropriate ministry to reach out to such churches/members in order to secure their acceptance of the restructured conferences.
6. The draft constitution already negotiated and agreed by the executive committees in the affected territories shall be used as a basis for constituting the new conferences.

B. The recommendations contained herein shall have the effect of rescinding action 140/35/04 taken on 14 March 2004 as contained in Supplement B of that minute."

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[20] The material factual circumstances surrounding the resolution are the following. As a result of the history of our country local conferences were established with overlapping geographical territories but divided along racial lines. By 1990 the TC, TOC, Cape Conference and Southern Hope Conference were such local conferences. The geographical territories of both the TC and the TOC

included the previous Transvaal Province, but the TC was then a white organisation whereas the TOC was not. The same then applied to the Cape Conference and Southern Hope Conference. The territories of both of them included the then Cape Province, but the one was a white organisation and the other not. Also there were then two union conferences of the church with overlapping geographical areas, similarly divided on racial basis.

[21] In the light hereof the General Conference on 11 October 1991 resolved that the two Southern Africa union conferences be merged into a new unified conference. This subsequently took place and the union conference (first defendant) was so established. The General Conference at the same meeting also resolved that "local conferences and fields be merged into new unified structures with boundaries drawn geographically".

[22] Consequently, on 11 November 2000, the union conference business session adopted the following guidelines for restructuring, namely:

- "1. The Biblical imperative for unity;
2. The socio-political situation;
3. Restructuring for effectiveness and efficiency;
4. Tithe percentage allocations."

The union conference business session also resolved that new local conference boundaries in South Africa shall follow the (new) provincial boundaries and appointed a restructuring committee to investigate and to report to the executive committee of the union conference before the middle of 2002.

- [23] On 17 March 2002 the executive committee of the union conference accepted the so-called revised traditional model for the new conference structures in Southern Africa, recommended by the restructuring committee. In terms of this recommendation and decision, boundaries of local conferences within the territory of the union conference were to be aligned as follows:

"Conference I. Limpopo Province, Gauteng, NW/Province, Mphumalanga (Swaziland included later)

Conference II. KNFC, FS (TOC), (Lesotho included later)

Conference III. E/Cape, W/Cape, N/Cape (+ TOC), St Helena

Conference IV. Lesotho

Conference V. Swaziland

Field VI. Namibia"

According to the restructuring model thus accepted, it was *inter alia* envisaged that both the TC and TOC would form part of a new conference within the area previously known as the Transvaal. The TC initially exhibited resistance hereto but during 2004, 79,8% of the business session of the TC voted in favour of what they referred to as the merger, subject however to an acceptable constitution for the conference being put forward. According to the evidence of pastor Botha this resolution was never rescinded. Such constitution was negotiated and a draft constitution approved by both the executive committees of the TC and the TOC. On 18 September 2005 however, a special business session of the TC rejected the draft constitution with a vote of 55,34% opposed and 44,67% in favour. At this meeting the provision in the constitution of the TC that it may be dissolved only by a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority vote of delegates present and voting at any regular or special business session of the TC, was reaffirmed.

[24] On 6 November 2005 the executive committee of the union conference voted to recommend to the executive committee of the division that the aforesaid revised traditional model for the alignment of conference boundaries in Southern Africa be accepted. In respect of implementation thereof the executive committee of the conference in effect recommended to the executive committee of the division the acceptance of the resolution. On 7 November 2005 the executive committee of the division approved this recommendation and resolved that the conference/field boundaries of the union conference shall be restructured in terms of the resolution. On 20 November 2005 the union conference business session adopted the resolution including the proposed amendment of its constitution. The union conference business session of course included delegates from both the TC and the TOC. The resolution was accepted by a vote of 163 for and 28 against.

[25] For reasons that are unnecessary to canvass, the dates of 19 March 2006 and 26 March 2006 mentioned in the

resolution were changed around. The Cape Conference and the Southern Hope Conference subsequently implemented the resolution. It would appear that as a result thereof the TOC congregations in the previous Cape Province are presently included in the new Cape Conference. On 26 March 2006 delegates of the TC and TOC gathered for the purpose of formally constituting the new Northern Conference. The respective delegations of the TC and TOC were each constituted in the same manner as required for a business session. For reasons that are not clear from the evidence, this meeting however never actually commenced. Such meeting also has not been reconvened in the period between 26 March 2006 and the institution of the present litigation.

[26] It is common cause that the resolution is based on paragraph B65 – 05 of the General Conference working policy. B65 – 05 at the time provided as follows:

**"B 65 Territorial Adjustments in Conferences / Missions /
Unions**

B 65 05 Territorial Adjustments or Resizing of Territories –

If it is proposed to make territorial adjustments between local fields or between unions, or to resize the territorial units, the proposal shall be considered by the executive committee of the next higher administrative organization, at a time when a full representation of the territories and organizations involved is present.

2. If the proposal is approved by the executive committee of the next higher level of church organization, the proposal shall then be routed to the executive committee of the division, in the case of local field territories, and of the General Conference, in the case of union territories, where, in each case, the final decision shall be made.

3. If the territory of a conference or union conference is involved, the administration of the next higher organization shall use its discretion to examine constitutions and legal requirements to determine whether a constituency meeting should be called and, if so, at what point(s) in the procedure.”

[27] The resolution, being in respect of local conferences, was in fact considered by the executive committee of the next higher administrative organisation, that is the union conference at a properly constituted meeting thereof. The resolution was subsequently approved by the executive committee of the next higher level of church organisation,

that is the division. The business session of the union conference resolved as is envisaged in subparagraph 3 of B 65 – 05.

[28] Counsel for the plaintiff conceded that B65 – 05 would apply if territorial adjustment of local conferences was involved. This concession is clearly correct. It is born out by the General Conference working policy provisions specifically dealing with discontinuation of conferences, establishment of new conferences and merger of local conferences. The term local fields in B65 – 05 in context refers to local conferences and both local conferences and union conferences are territorial units.

[29] As a result of the withdrawal of their claims by the first and second plaintiffs and the subsequent concession by the counsel for the plaintiffs as well as an amendment asked for during argument, the plaintiffs' claim the following substantial relief:

- i. That the decision taken by the union conference which has the effect that the TC merges with the

TOC and/or which has the effect that the TC and TOC will cease to exist as local conferences, is *ultra vires*.

- ii. That it be declared that the TC and TOC have not been dissolved and that all members of the TC prior to November 2005 are still members of the TC.
- iii. That it be declared that paragraph B 65 – 05 of the working policy does not entitle the union conference to unilaterally dissolve the TC and/or the TOC and/or adopt a resolution and/or take a decision that the TC and TOC should merge into one conference.

[30] The argument upon which the relief is claimed is first, that no territorial adjustment or resizing of territories are involved in the resolution and that the resolution, based as it is on B 65 – 05, is therefore *ultra vires* the powers of the union conference and invalid and second, that this is specifically illustrated by paragraph A of resolution, namely that unilateral dissolution of the TC and forming of the new Northern Conference took place as a result of the meeting of 26 March 2006 not taking place.

[31] Both these propositions are however refuted by the evidence. It was conceded in evidence, readily by pastor Botha and pastor Spencer and reluctantly by Dr Ficker, that the resolution indeed envisaged the adjustment of the boundaries of the local conferences within the territory of the union conference. These concessions are undoubtedly correct. This can *inter alia* be illustrated by the following. The territory of the TOC included congregations in the Northern Cape and the Free State Provinces. In terms of the resolution the boundaries of the TOC would be readjusted by relinquishing its territory in the Northern Cape to the new Cape Conference and its territory in the Free State to the new Kwazulu Natal/Free State conference. Also the territorial boundaries of the Southern Hope Conference included congregations in Kwazulu Natal, which in terms of the resolution would be included in the KwaZulu Natal/Free State conference.

[32] It is of course correct that on the face of it the resolution provided as counsel for the plaintiffs indicated. But this is not a case where the integration rule applies. There is no reason why the court cannot take cognisance of the actual

facts in respect of the resolution. This is also a matter of internal church administration and the court should in my judgment where possible defer to what the organ of the church that took the resolution says that it means. In the present case both the facts and the meaning given to the resolution by the defendants are clear. The evidence of both pastor Botha and pastor Spencer show that after 26 March 2006 and to this day the TC in all respects continued to exist and to function as before and that the relationship and interaction between the TC and the union conference remain unaffected. What is more, this was expressly admitted by the defendants in open court in cross-examination and argument before me. Counsel for the defendants made it very clear what the position of the defendants is on this point, namely that the resolution should not be interpreted and was not interpreted by them to mean that there was an automatic dissolution of the TC and establishment of the new Northern Conference. The defendants' position is that the constituency meeting in order to formally constitute the new Northern Conference has not yet taken place *inter alia* as a result of the intervention of the present litigation, that it still has to take

place, that in the light hereof the TC continues to exist and will continue to exist until the new conference is formally constituted, as the TC will in this regard only be dissolved as a result of the formal constitution of the new conference. Despite the wording of the resolution therefore, it is common cause that the TC has not been dissolved and remains in existence and that the new Northern Conference has not yet been brought into existence.

[33] As I have found that the defendants did not act *ultra vires* and that it is not disputed that the TC (or TOC) has not been dissolved, the relief claimed cannot be granted. It follows that the action must be dismissed.

[34] The defendants are of course the successful parties. I have however concluded, in the exercise of my discretion in respect of costs and for the reasons that follow, that there should be no order as to costs. It is clear that the meaning that the resolution conveyed on the face of it, played a major role in the institution and the prosecution of the litigation by the plaintiffs. The defendants are responsible for wording this resolution in such a manner as

not to reflect their true intention and for so leading the plaintiffs up to the wrong path. Only at the trial did the defendants make it clear that they admit that the TC continues to exist. The defendants insisted that the congregations have no legal personality and this resulted in substantial evidence and argument on that point. As pointed out above, the defendants are unsuccessful in that respect. In my view however the most important aspect is the following. The parties are part and parcel of one church. The parties will in future have to work together in reconciliation, trust and brotherhood, particularly, on my aforesaid finding, in order to implement the resolution. An award of costs in these proceedings can be or can be perceived as a stumbling block in this regard and should in my judgment be avoided in the particular circumstances of this case.

[35] The action is dismissed. There is no order as to costs.


C. H. G. VAN DER MERWE, J

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